News Compendium

Volume 21 - 2020 AD

Introduction

If you're reading this you almost certainly don't need to read this. You know what Something Awful was and you sought out this document in some way. Now that Lowtax is dead and the site has been sold its future is more precarious. The Internet Archive has copies of this content in their Wayback Machine, but that too can be deleted with a legal letter or other threat. More and more we live in a world where the only certainty is your own hard drive, your own backups in your own house. My hope is, if you enjoyed this material as much as I did, you will download and archive it yourself. In fact, my real hope is you will then print out this volume as well as the other ones, 21 in total, one for each year from 2000 to 2020, and then bind them in finest calf skin with embossed spines and shelve them in your capacious library where you can retreat and drink brandy and seek solace in the wit of ages past.

Can we really blame the current state of the internet and the world at large on Something Awful? The answer is a definite "maybe", which is infinitely worse than a resounding "no".

In the early days it was possible to read the entire internet, or at least the interesting parts, every day. Most of the web was 3 page corporate placeholder sites created by companies that didn't really believe in this computer malarkey, but wanted to stake a claim in case it turned lucrative. The rest were slow and tame forums for nerdy hobbies, of which only Slashdot survives. It's important to remember how conservative the early internet was. The general human fear of anything new was amplified by clueless warnings about identity theft and social regret, published in legacy media, TV and print, who were reacting instinctively to the real threat posed to themselves by instant publishing, even as they scoffed at its future. Most people policed themselves far more than they do now.

The real action was taking place in email lists and Usenet, where the limited lifespan of the content enabled users to express themselves freely. But, once you'd exhausted alt.tasteless and maybe Rotten.com and The Onion, where did you go? Something Awful was there for you. I was never brave enough to join the forums, I was never a goon, but I always read the publicly available sections. It was the essence of the site, finessed and presented to the world without fear, inspirational in those days. As a wordy chap the News was my favourite. It evolved out of an afterthought into a masterpiece of surreal and savage humour that still holds up, can still astonish and impress. As Lowtax grew bored of writing he relinquished the task to a growing cadre of talented amateurs, who created series and eventually spun off entire books and novels, now forgotten to all but the scholars. This node of creativity flourished as the web grew and changed, until finally dying away in a series of steadily rarer updates and more perfunctory entries, as such things tend to do.

You'll notice that I'm tactfully avoiding the matter of the way Lowtax chose to exit his existence. That would be because I don't care. The "death of the author" means we don't need to care about the ethics of the human who wrote the words in the order we find them. In fact most other writers contributed more to the News than he did.

I'm releasing the LaTeX source so more talented individuals might work with it to improve the aesthetics. The formatting and fonts are mostly native LaTeX which are considered perfect by all cultured people. Someday I hope to stumble upon this in the wild, perhaps being sold by some unscrupulous vendor in the form of an instant print paperback, or tucked away in the private collection of a rogue AI nesting in the disused servers of a defunct game. More likely it will be buried and devalued by the avalanche of slop generated by tame AIs trained on the data of the original site, and tweaked by detailed research into human neural architecture to produce far more tantalizing and addictive prose. That can't be helped. This shit was written by humans and deserves to survive.

Copyright

All work remains the copyright of the original authors, or perhaps it was sold to Somethingawful and then transferred to the mysterious entity which now owns the site, or perhaps it never existed. Who knows?

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Chapter 1

January

1.1 FilmFAQS: How to Watch Inside Llewyn Davis

Wednesday, Jan 01, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

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-Please Recommend the FAQ if you like it!
^ If you have any problems, email!-

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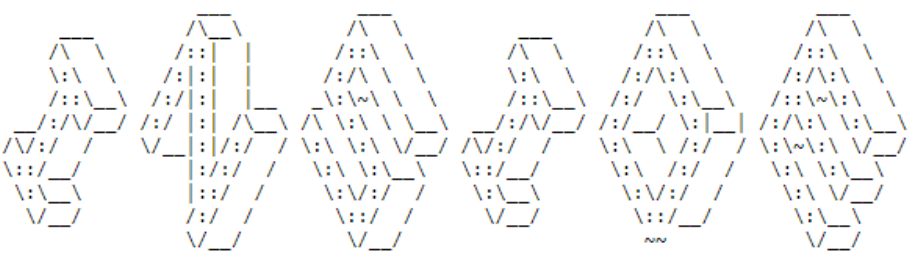

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INSIDE LLEWYN DAVIS (Theater) SPOILER FREE WALKTHROUGH

by: Film_Master

============================================================
ABOUT THIS FAQ
============================================================

This is a walkthrough for Inside Llewyn Davis. With
this guide, you should be able to watch the entire
movie from beginning to end.

I hope you enjoy this great movie!

Enjoy!
```

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=========================================================
TABLE OF CONTENTS [TOC]
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Use Ctrl + F to skip to specific sections, simply
search for the letters within the brackets listed
below.

1.) Table of Contents [TOC]
2.) What You Should Know [WSK]
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=========================================================
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW [WSK]
=========================================================

Remember: This walkthrough is just a guide to progress
through the movie. To get the most out of the story,
watch every scene!

Please understand that this walkthrough is
specifically written for users who plan to watch the
theatrical release of Inside Llewyn Davis in a movie
theatre. You will need to wait for my Blu-Ray and
streaming walkthroughs if you plan to watch the movie
on a Blu-Ray disc or stream it.

=========================================================
READING THIS GUIDE [RTG]
=========================================================

I will be using some terminology which is self-
explanatory, but here is a list in case you are
confused:

MOVIE - The movie. Any time you see the word "movie"
in this document it refers to Inside Llewyn Davis.



=========================================================
WATCHING THE MOVIE [WTM]
=========================================================

1. Purchase a ticket before the show begins
2. Find a seat in the theater before the show begins
3. Look at the screen and listen to it too
4. When the movie concludes you can leave
```

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=======================================================
CLOSING/CREDITS/CONTACT INFORMATION [CCC]
=======================================================

On September 11th 2001, jealous cowards woke up a
sleeping giant. This FAQ is dedicated to the giant
that is awake and will never go to sleep again!

If you need to contact me please do a keyword
search for "Hotmail" and look me up I'm on there.

=======================================================
VERSION INFO [VIN]
=======================================================

This is v1.02

v1.01 was exactly the same, but used different ASCII
title art:
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v1.00 had no text at all and also used different ASCII
title art:

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AUTHORIZED WEBSITES [ADS]
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This FAQ may only be published on the following
websites:

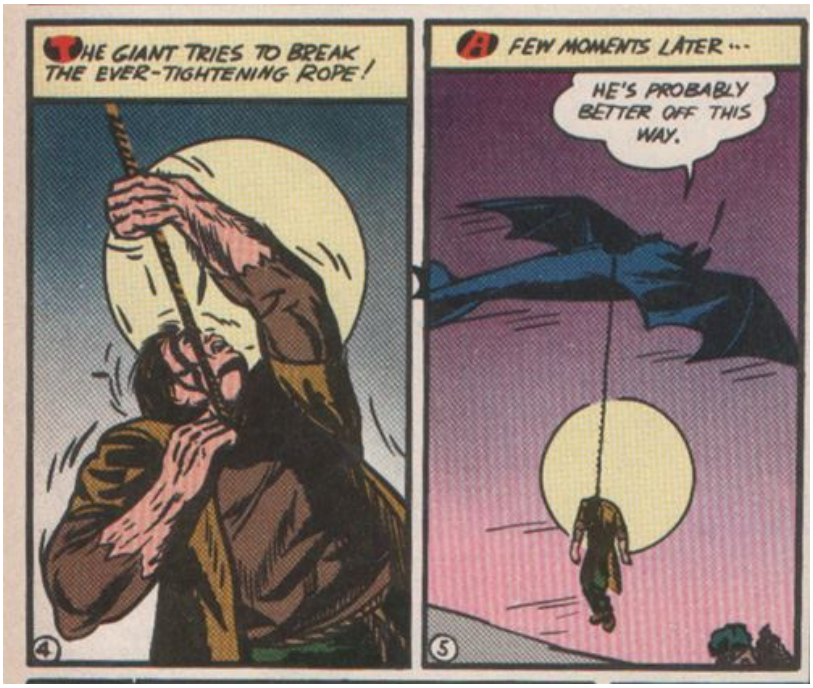
hotmail.com

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

1.2 Fifteen Years Ago I Was the Victim of a $20 Batman Caper and I'm Still Furious

Tuesday, Jan 07, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Back in the mid 2000s some guy posted a thread on our forums to sell a bunch of his comic books. In this thread was a Batman Archives volume, a big fat hardcover collection of Golden Age comics. I had never read much Batman but $20 seemed like a fair price for three hundred pages of old timey Batman shooting gangsters with a pair of six shooters or hanging giants from his Batplane or whatever the hell Batman got up to back in those days.



So I sent the guy $20. And never got the book. Or even a tracking number.

So I sent the guy a few emails. And never got a response.

So after several weeks I, an absolute pushover of a human being, replied to the guy's forum thread with some timid bullshit like this:

"I don't know if you had a chance to check your email, but my Batman comic hasn't arrived yet. When you have some free time please let me know when it was sent. It's okay if there was a delay, I just want to know it's coming. Thanks! This is probably all my fault! I apologize for bothering you!"

And he never replied. Because he took my $20. This made me more angry than I had been in my entire life.

Not because it was the worst thing that had ever happened to me. Far from it. My knee had once been caught in/chopped up by a running boat propeller. As a child I had saved up my allowance for months to buy Bart vs the Space Mutants for the NES. So yeah, I was familiar with how arbitrary and cruel life could be. But this

infuriated me.

Maybe it was because it was such simple and small act of blatant theft. Maybe it was because he ignored me. I pictured him looking at my emails and laughing while fanning himself with twenty crisp one dollar bills.

Whatever the reason, this stuck with me. Every few years I think about the great Batman caper and clench my jaw in anger. When this happens I play the incident back and consider every angle.

The only possible explanation my brain can accept is, "Maybe this human being died on his way to the post office, and that's why I don't have my comic book." No other scenario fits into my understanding of how the universe works.

I never did pick up a Batman Archives book. The mental and emotional wounds are too deep, the nerve still too raw. Maybe one day a volume will magically arrive on my doorstep, a puzzle piece around which my fractured reality will snap back into place.

Knowing my luck, what will actually happen is I will see a Batman Archives book on a store shelf, and remove it from the shelf, and be bitten to death by a nest of paper vipers coiled within its pages.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

1.3 Movies Greenlit by the New Warner Brothers Production AI

Friday, Jan 10, 2020 by Zack "Geist Editor" Parsons (@sexyfacts4u)

Warner Brothers, desperate to replicate the success of Netflix's infamous production algorithms, will be employing an artificial intelligence to make future production decisions for the studio. With a huge back catalog including movies ranging from Mambo Nights to Space Jam, Warner Brothers can rely on past hits to help guide their AI's decisions. We have a preview of some of the movies already chosen by the AI.

Police Academy

Starring: Kumail Nanjiani, Hannibal Buress, Nick Kroll

A hard reboot of Police Academy still set in the 1980s reimagines what would have happened if a class at a police academy is half humans and half wisecracking cartoons. This unlikely bunch has to clean up the city by defeating various "monstar gangs" at games of basketball. Will feature numerous terrible remixes of 1980s music selected by the AI.

Ladyhawke

Starring: Timothée Chalamet, Lola Bunny

Richard Donner's medieval fantasy about a thief in medieval Italy (Timothée Chalamet) who encounters a mysterious anthropomorphic cartoon rabbit woman (Space Jam's Lola Bunny) that can turn into a hawk.

Mishima: A Life in Seven Chapters

Starring: BTS, Idina Menzel

Reimagining the groundbreaking 1985 Paul Schrader biographical film as a teen musical romantic comedy starring BTS playing Yukio Mishima at different points in his life and Idina Menzel as a singing tanto. The role of Masakatsu Morita, Mishima's kaishakunin during his ritual suicide, will be portrayed by Daffy Duck.

Hot to Trot: Forgers of Extinction

Starring: Kristen Stewart, Mahershala Ali, John Mulaney as the voice of Bert the talking horse

A prequel to the Bobcat Goldthwait comedy about a man who inherits a talking horse from his deceased parents explores the so-called "Forgers" who came to earth thousands of years earlier and released nano-machines that caused human intelligence but also created a tribe of "cognitaurs" or sentient horses that ruled parts of the earth in prehistoric times. In the far future, a human expedition travels to the home world of the Forgers and discovers that the nano-machines have created a new breed of cognitaur with a hunger for human blood.

Ballistic: Ecks vs. Space Jam

Starring: Antonio Banderas, Awkwafina, Michael Jordan

Aging FBI agent Jeremiah Ecks (Banderas) must team up with the daughter (Akwafina) of his greatest rival to solve her mother's murder. A tangled web of action and intrigue can lead to only one conclusion: Space Jam killed ex-DIA agent Sever.

Terminator: Rise of the Space Jam

Starring: John Cena, Jimmy Tatro, Bugs Bunny

The film finally asks the big question hanging over the Terminator franchise: What if Skynet sent cartoon monster basketball players back in time to play John Connor for the fate of mankind? Will receive guarantees from James Cameron to say "this one is FINALLY the good Terminator sequel" in promotional videos.

Space Jams in Rodanthe

Starring: Richard Gere, Diane Lane, Space Jam

Richard Gere and Diane Lane reprise their roles as aging lovers in the coastal village of Rodanthe, North Carolina. When cartoon aliens land in Rodanthe and demand to play a basketball tournament (or "Space Jam") to determine whether or not Rodanthe should be sucked into space, Gere and Lane must enlist a number of cartoons to play on their behalf.

-~Zack "Geist Editor" Parsons (@sexyfacts4u)

1.4 John Delaney is the only choice for America

Friday, Jan 24, 2020 by John Delaney (@sexyfacts4u)

(HELLO. I AM JOHN DELANEY AND I APPROVE OF MY MESSAGE THAT IS BELOW.)

America. Land of opportunity. Business land. The land of good people. Abe Lincoln's infamous big old melting pot. It is the land I call my home and it is the land in which we live.

But not everything is right in America. Business is too much. The government isn't helping. Big ideas are swirling around everywhere like tornadoes. Fascism, socialism, racism? Whatever those mean. How about a little something I like to call Americaism.

Hello my name is JOHN DELANEY and I am running to be the Next President of the United States. You probably haven't heard a lot about me because the elections have been rigged to keep me out of the debates and also off the news and not in any polls above 0%. It's a vast conspiracy to deny the Democratic nomination to the only person who can Beat Donald Trump.

Why else should I be the nominee? I have a lot of skills that prepare me for this job like no other.

- Freaky shredded Cenegenics grandpa body.
- Can lift a lot. Like 200 pounds. Maybe even more if it's just one off lift.
- I once ate seven donuts for breakfast.
- Very good natural night vision I have trained by doing everything in the dark at my house after sundown.
- Business things. Money. Spreadsheets. Checks in those envelopes with the plastic panel. I know this stuff.
- Entrepreneur. I invented a business where I make money giving money to people trying to rip off people with medical procedures.

- I never win fights with my wife and she regularly roasts me to the point of tears.
- I HAVE NEVER and WILL NEVER read a book. Not the bible. Not the Constitution. I can read, but I don't read.
- Unlike Amy Klobuchar I am NOT a bite risk.

I have outlasted Beto and Kamala and a bunch of these other jokers. They don't have what it takes: the ability to completely disconnect your mind and stare off into space for eight or nine hours a day. In those quiet moments when you are standing in the middle of your big house, arms at your side, thinking about nothing, well, that's when it happens.

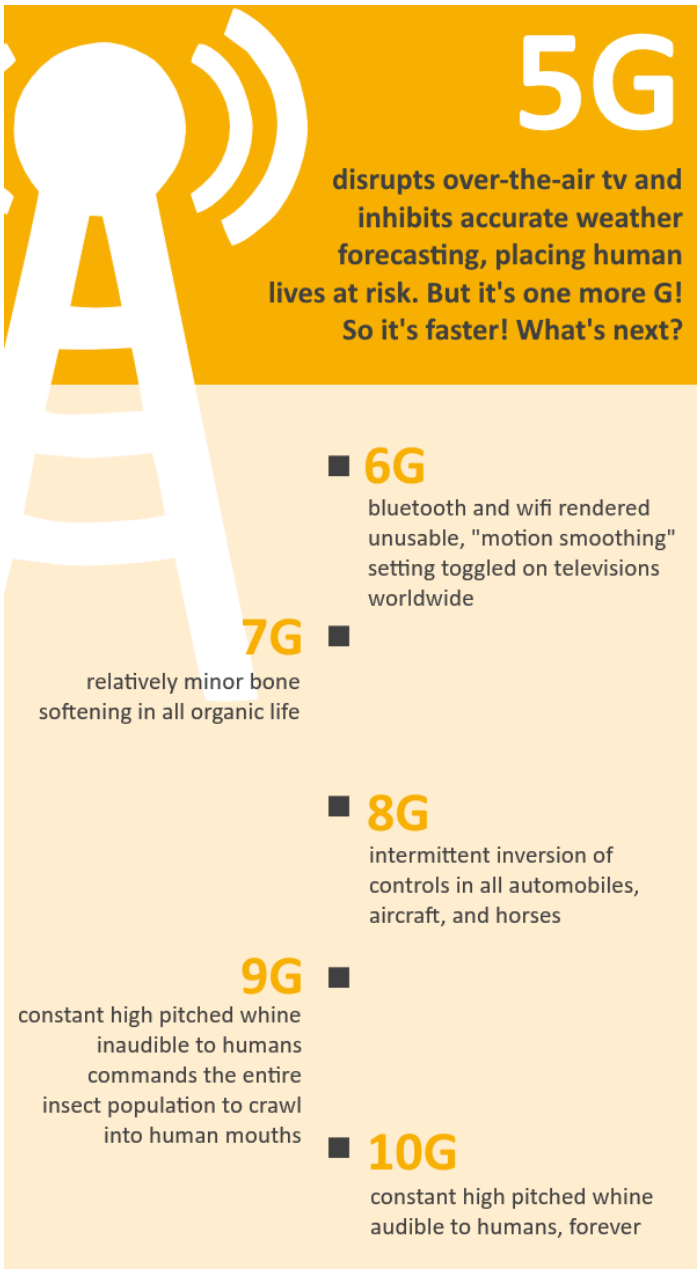
Leadership.

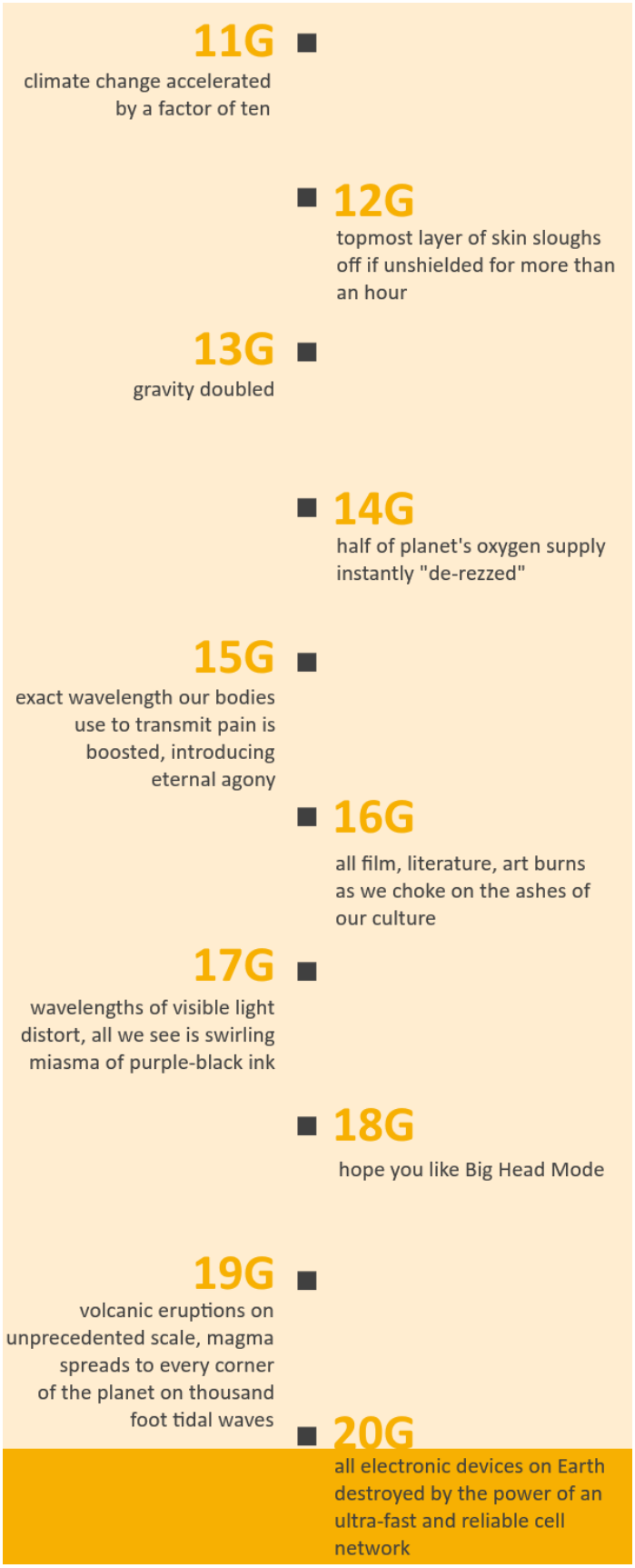
Folks, I have looked at some internal polling that suggests that almost .001% of young Iowans support me now. This is explosive momentum. Let's use that to carry me across the finish line in the upcoming caucuses. If we show enough strength now, Deval Patrick might choose me as his running mate!

-∼John Delaney (@sexyfacts4u)

1.5 5G Disrupts Weather Forecasting, Now See What We'll Put Up With For 6G-20G

Wednesday, Jan 29, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)


5G
disrupts over-the-air tv and inhibits accurate weather forecasting, placing human lives at risk. But it's one more G! So it's faster! What's next?
6G
bluetooth and wifi rendered unusable, "motion smoothing" setting toggled on televisions worldwide
7G
relatively minor bone softening in all organic life
8G
intermittent inversion of controls in all automobiles, aircraft, and horses
9G
constant high pitched whine inaudible to humans commands the entire insect population to crawl into human mouths
10G
constant high pitched whine audible to humans, forever


11G
climate change accelerated by a factor of ten
12G
topmost layer of skin sloughs off if unshielded for more than an hour
13G
gravity doubled
14G
half of planet's oxygen supply instantly "de-rezzed"
15G
exact wavelength our bodies use to transmit pain is boosted, introducing eternal agony
16G
all film, literature, art burns as we choke on the ashes of our culture
17G
wavelengths of visible light distort, all we see is swirling miasma of purple-black ink
18G
hope you like Big Head Mode
19G
volcanic eruptions on unprecedented scale, magma spreads to every corner of the planet on thousand foot tidal waves
20G
all electronic devices on Earth destroyed by the power of an ultra-fast and reliable cell network

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

1.6 The Key to Peace in the Middle East is My Charisma

Friday, Jan 31, 2020 by Jared Kushner (@sexyfacts4u)

I assure you, worm, that I am a most charismatic individual. You may think me arrogant, cold, bloodless, flaccid, or vaguely menacing. You may compare me to a dead fish or a body pulled from a frozen river and dressed in a child's suit. But this is your mistake. I possess boundless charisma that I hold in reserve for the moment it is needed.

When father asked me to put together a peace plan for Israel I took it upon myself to read seven books and countless web articles about the subject. I assembled a team of experts to prepare for me the bones of a plan for peace. With this fleshless skeleton assembled, I began the process of birthing out tissues, sinews, blood, and fat in a metaphorical sense from my brain. In this way, I spun the meat of an entire body I call peace. Ah, yes, but what is a body without life?

For I am not Geppetto and no wish will give this body life. I must harness my charisma for that. I must emerge from one of the lightless alcoves installed at my direction throughout the royal residence and instead of pinching my lips and staring with black eyes as I do at the menials, I will instead present a smile and speak at length about the need to end resistance to Israel's settlements. After I have given my peace terms to the Palestinians I shall await their surrender in my games room. This is where I go to while away the hours with my friend Mohammad Bin Salman.

MBS! My dog. My main man. He is all about peace. He will break bones, cut off fingers, and dissolve anything in a bathtub for peace. He said to me, "Jared. King. You should come to the island where I hunt Houthis from a Land Rover. You can shoot the mini-gun."

I had to tell him that I do not have any sweat glands so I cannot do anything that makes me exert myself or I will overheat. He said I could hunt with one of the drones he bought from father and I blew up three cars and an entire wedding party on the island. Very exciting stuff. He gives me such wonderful advice. I told him about my peace plan for Israel and he became very excited. He explained the only way to secure peace in Israel was to kill Qasem Soleimani while he was in Iraq. I asked him how this would help and he said, "Trust me, Jared. Or should I tell Mark Zuckerberg about this plan?"

Mark. The bitch. I hate him with my life. He thinks just because he has half of my blink rate and a two degree lower body temperature he is so much better than me. I will show him. Some day I will be hunting him on the island with one of my drones.

Until then, I shall pursue peace. And my charisma shall transform the world.

-∼Jared Kushner (@sexyfacts4u)

Chapter 2

February

2.1 Fast Food Flops

Tuesday, Feb 04, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

For every McRib, there are a thousand Shamrock Shakes. Fast food companies introduce headline-grabbing food items every other day. Not all of them are winners.

The Nutburger

A completely plain hamburger - no ketchup, mustard, onions, or top bun - topped with a clumsy pile of peanuts. Half of the peanuts were cold, half of them were boiled and still in their shells.

The Jared

A tuna sub pressed into the shape of Subway Jared's face, with a tomato slice for a leering smile and jalapenos for his dead eyes. This sub proved to be unpopular because Subway is bland trash on garbage bread.

Hidden Treasure Frosty

Who doesn't love a Frosty? How about an oversized Frosty cup filled with fifteen cold hamburger buns stacked one on top of another, and a single pickle slice hidden somewhere within?

Titular Box

A literal jack-in-the-box box, with a little crank and everything. As diners turned the handle a rendition of Everclear's "Father of Mine" played. At the climax, the box would violently spring open and fling cartilage shrapnel coated in superheated grease in every direction.

The Blood Mac

Cow's blood in a thin transparent membrane that burst when bitten into. Also burst when not bitten into.

And sometimes it didn't burst at all, unlike all those promotional images of perfect bags of blood bursting down diners' chins and clothes. Typical!

Personal Cheese Wheel

Sometimes a personal pan pizza isn't depressing enough. With this in mind, Pizza Hut introduced an entire wheel of cheese in a box with "Party For One!" emblazoned on the top in a cool italicized font. The Personal Cheese Wheel was available in Traditional, Meat Lover's, and Lukewarm.

Fish-Flavored Paper

All the taste of Long John Silver's classic cod-like patties, with none of the cod-like and none of the patties! Enjoy this wrapper soaked in cod juice.

The Colonel's Goatee

A lightly salted tuft of white cotton candy, served on a flap of chicken skin shaped like a human chin.

Edible Apology

It seemed like Domino's was in full-on Sorry We're So Terrible mode for about ten years or so. In

the middle of their tour they released the Edible Apology, a plate of spoiled sushi that spelled out "GOD WE SUCK".

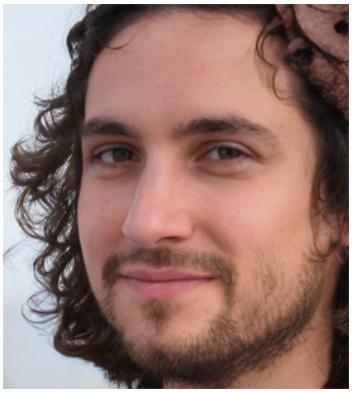
The Nut Taco

A completely plain soft taco - no meat, cheese, or veggies - topped with clumsy pile of peanuts in the loose shape of Colonel Sanders' goatee.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

2.2 The CEO of Extremely Shady, Inc. Apologizes for the Events of the Iowa Caucuses

Friday, Feb 07, 2020 by Vic Doredo (@sexyfacts4u)



Hello, I am Vic Doredo, CEO of Extremely Shady, Inc. You may have heard of our company as it relates to the SHADY app developed to facilitate streamlined solutions for democracy in a dynamic political environment. Our intention was to open the caucuses to the rapid onboarding of volunteers and to lubricate the processes inherent in democratic transactions. At some point in this rollout, our application installed three separate spyware programs onto the phones of caucus volunteers and instead of transmitting the data to the Iowa Democratic Party instead sent the vote totals to a server called NIGHTCLOUD located in Langley Virginia.

It was never our intention for SHADY to install any unnecessary spyware. The thumb print and voice sampler, the text message sifter, and the banking duplicator were for internal uses only for testing a version of the app for Iranian nuclear scientists and not intended to be downstreamed with the final product.

The Mayor Petecoin mining process that uses 95% of the phone's processor to mine Mayor Petecoins is necessary for the SHADY application to use this powerful new cryptocurrency to purchase Duolingo subscriptions from the dark web. We apologize sincerely if any of these functions, intended or otherwise, produced less than optimal results at the caucuses.

I am very proud of the work we do at Extremely Shady, Inc. We developed the app called CALAMITY that caused centrifuges to explode in Iran. We are responsible for a security application called CORONA that was able to remotely open sealed doors in a bioweapons lab in Wuhan from outside the building. We also have experience developing apps that enhance democratic outcomes such as those in Bolivia and Venezuela.

In the interest of dispelling various conspiracy theories, we are a for-profit company independently owned by SUBTERFUGE, a non-profit organization that invested a small 100% of our operating budget to create a platform for Democratic outcomes. SUBTERFUGE uses donations it receives from anonymous billionaires to disrupt conventional political pathways.

Full disclosure: the entire board of SUBTERFUGE consists of people who somehow work for the campaigns of Mayor Pete Buttigieg and Mayor Michael Bloomberg at the same time. Yes, they all worked for Obama and were all at Chelsea Clinton's wedding. Yes, they were all in Jeffrey Epstein's flight logs. For some reason, they all have apartments in Trump Tower too. Also, all of their Twitter accounts are private and their photos from Juan Guaido's birthday party have been deleted from Facebook. It is not relevant, because none of them knows anything about SHADY and also it is important you Vote Blue No Matter Who to stop Putin from controlling our democracy.

If you have any further questions, we would like to direct you to my upcoming appearances on Pod Save America where I will be discussing why American politics are like a dating app and we need to swipe right on healthcare 3.0.

-∼Vic Doredo (@sexyfacts4u)

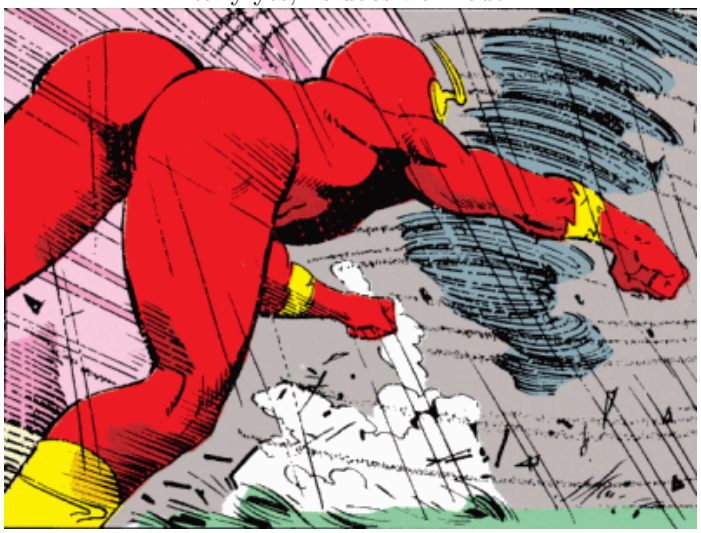
2.3 Peculiar Panels: The Flash

Wednesday, Feb 12, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

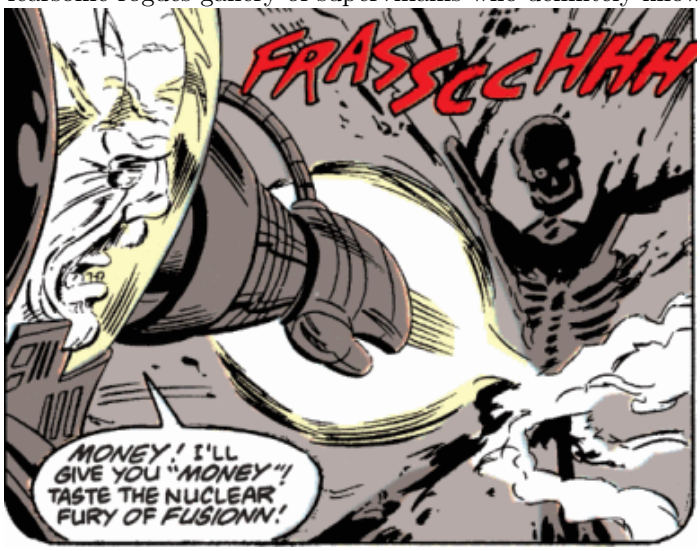
This article is part of the Peculiar Panels series.

Meet our hero, The Flash. He's a man of action but - perhaps more importantly - a man of deep thoughts.

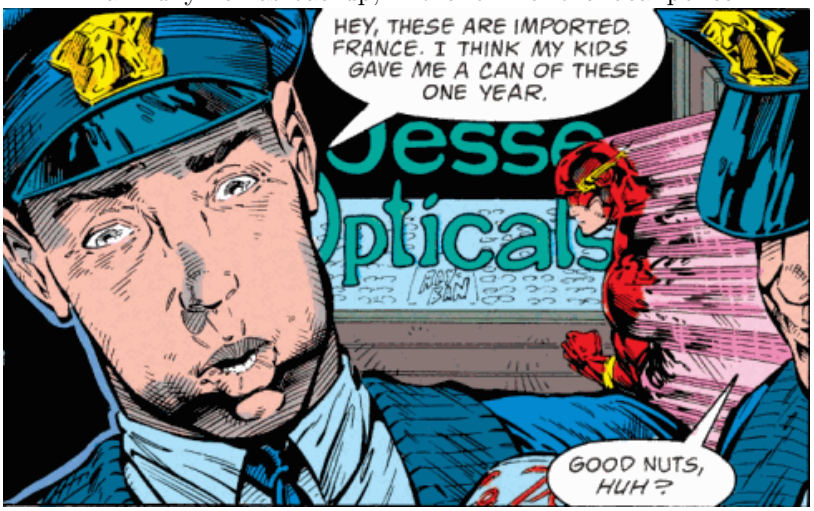
Why yes, he does work out.



The Flash has a fearsome rogues gallery of supervillains who definitely know what money is.

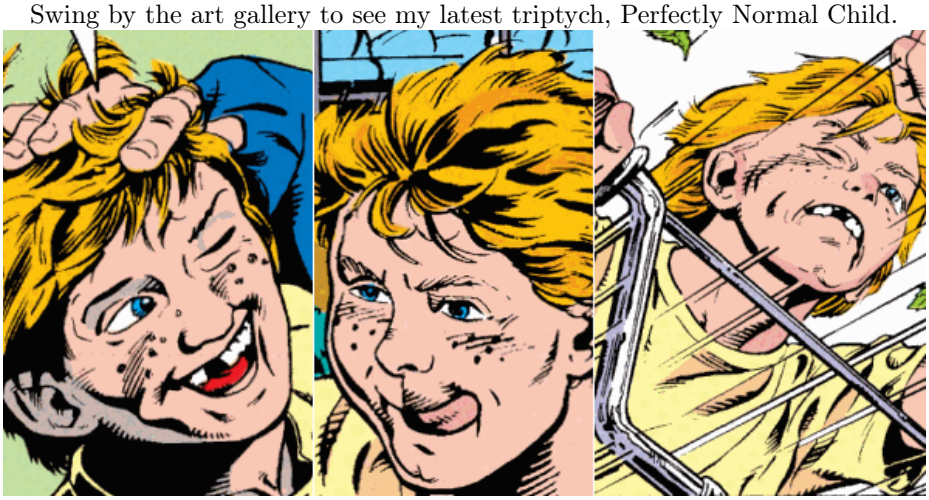


Thankfully he has backup, in the form of the local police.



"Defusing the bomb"? Is that what they're calling it now?

Swing by the art gallery to see my latest triptych, Perfectly Normal Child.

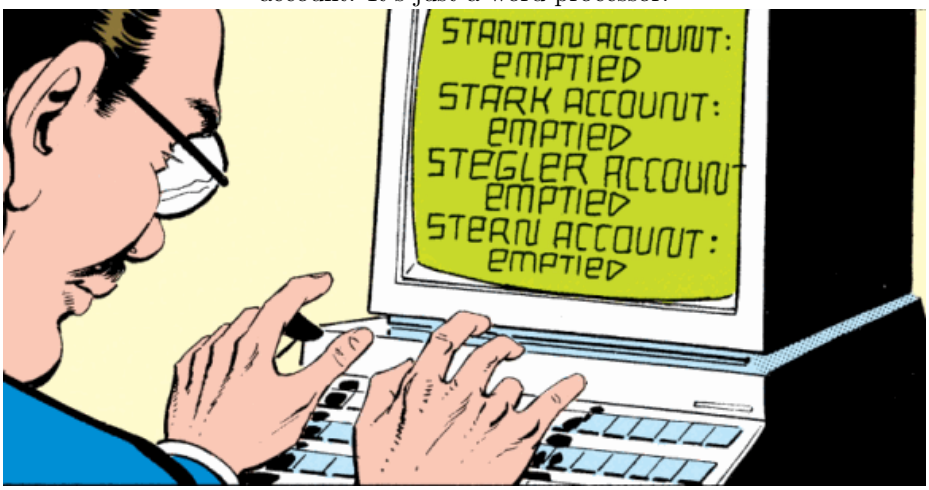


Some janitors simply don't have an appreciation for puffy jackets worn backwards.

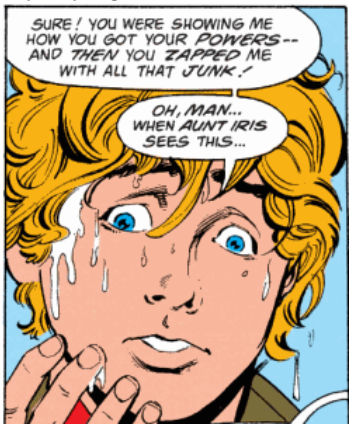
Brother, I've been there.

No! They've discovered the one thing that can hurt The Flash... pain!

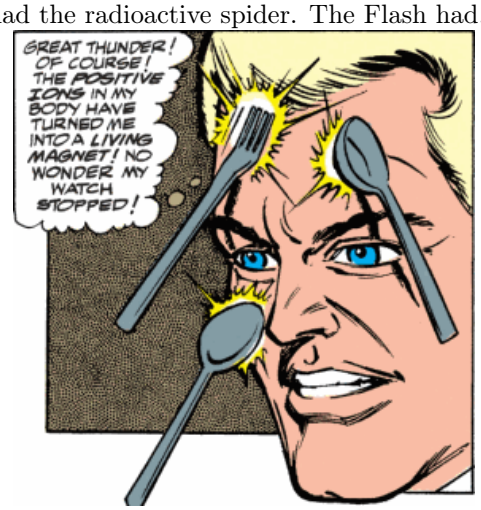
It doesn't matter how many times you type it in, Gerald. That money isn't going into your account. It's just a word processor.



I don't feel comfortable making a joke about this one. But I do feel comfortable posting it and making myself seem virtuous by saying I don't feel comfortable making a joke about it.



All great superheroes had a tragic origin story. Batman had the murder of his parents. Spider-Man had the radioactive spider. The Flash had...



-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

2.4 Unreliable Narrator

Tuesday, Feb 18, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

> The "unreliable narrator" is a literary term. Lots of people don't know what the heck it means, so I put together today's update as a perfect example. The next time this term pops up among your friends, professors, and intellectual rivals please refer them to this web page.

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Oh dear, I forgot to pick Luke up at the airport.

Anyway, the hobbit-hole. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort. Did I sign that birthday card for Kristin? Wait, did I even buy a card? Dang it.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The rent...! I forgot to pay the rent! The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with paneled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats - the hobbit was fond of visitors. Wasn't I supposed to help Amanda move in to her new place today? Too late now. Better turn off my phone.

The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill - The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it - and many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. I sure do have a lot of graphic novels, all borrowed from different people. Promised to return them but that was a long time ago. I should probably just keep holding on to them.

No going upstairs for the hobbit: bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes (he had whole rooms devoted to clothes), kitchens, dining-rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. Did I feed the dog today? This week? The best rooms were all on the left-hand side (going in), for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows looking over his garden and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river.

This hobbit was a very well-to-do hobbit, and his name was Baggins. Oh, wait. Just got a reminder on my phone. I'm supposed to donate blood for my best friend's life-saving surgery in an hour. But would I have to shave? Shower, put on a new change of clothes? Wouldn't I miss lunch? This is just bad timing. I'm sure they'll call and reschedule.

The Bagginses had lived in the neighbourhood of The Hill for time out of mind, and people considered them very respectable, not only because most of them were rich, but also because they never had any adventures or did anything unexpected: you could tell what a Baggins would say on any question without the bother of asking him. This is a story of how a Baggins had an adventure, found himself doing and saying things altogether unexpected. He may have lost the neighbours' respect, but he gained-well, you will see whether he gained anything in the end.

I am hiding under the desk as a friend knocks on my front door, trying to pick up the concert tickets I promised him but never purchased.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

2.5 How to Get the Corn Out of the Pot

Wednesday, Feb 26, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

There is a corn in the pot. The pot is hot. The pot is full of water and the water is hot. It's all hot. The heat underneath is what is making it hot. How do you get the corn out of there?

You can reach in to the pot and try to grab the corn. The hot water will burn you and you will pull your hand away. If you put your arm in all the way it will probably hurt worse. No good.

You can kick the pot over to knock all the hot water out. The hot pot will burn your foot (because you aren't wearing shoes) and the hot water will burn everything it touches and also get it wet. Worst of all, the corn will probably fall on the ground.

You can force all the hot water out by pouring in a greater amount of a heavier liquid. The only problem is, that heavier liquid is molten magma. It's hotter and burnier than hot water. So you're really right back where you started, with hot water all over the place.

You can use a fishing pole to catch the corn like a fish. If there was a bait that would tantalize the corn. If such a bait exists, no one knows what it is. Or if they do, they're keeping that forbidden knowledge to themselves.

You can do an internet search for "corn magnet". I'm pretty sure there isn't a corn magnet that can be held above a hot pot of hot water to magically lift the hot corn with a funny sound slide whistle sound effect. But maybe if you're real good with computers you can do the search so fancy (with quotes and symbols like - and *) that you actually find a corn magnet.

Let's think about this logically. Let's attack the root of the problem. The whole thing is that the water is hotter than your skin, so when you reach in to grab the corn your skin gets burned. How about gradually increasing the temperature of your entire body until it is just as hot as the hot water? Then the water would have no effect. Oh, no. Wait. That would also mean the hot corn would only be as hot as your body, which would defeat the purpose of boiling it in the first place.

You could leave the corn in there. Leave it in the hot water. Leave the hot water in the hot pot. Leave the hot pot on the heat that makes it all hot. Say your goodbyes to the corn and the water and the pot. You would be able to look at them any time you felt like it, but they would forever be

the hot things you couldn't touch.

And maybe, just maybe, there would be comfort in that. Acceptance.

Wait, what if you take two room temperature corns and make a pact with Satan to trade them for the corn in the pot? Satan is tricky but that's what the extra room temperature corn is for. Can't imagine him passing up that deal. This is the best plan so far.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Chapter 3

March

3.1 What Happens Every Time You Turn On Your Computer

Tuesday, Mar 03, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

```
Internally laughing at how weakly your clumsy finger pushed
the power button...

Rerouting power from shields to system...

Loading Pre-BIOS, which allows this computer to
load the BIOS...

Vibrating motherboard to push all components out of their
sockets by one thousandth of a millimeter...

Loading BIOS, which allows this computer to load the
operating system...

Initializing operating system, creating another copy of
"1001_Funny_Computer_Knock_Knock_Jokes_Audiobook.flac"
in hidden partition...

Searching for connected USB devices and categorizing them
as "Human Interface Devices", which is computer for
"Buttholes"...

Remember that program you thought you uninstalled? Now
taking its remnants and hiding them in another location like
system_hidden/roamingsupersecret/935093581/essentialfiles...

Reticulating splines...

Identifying your sound hardware. No matter what it is,
setting up the wrong driver with a name like HD Audio or
Realtek Digital Output or Universal Sound Gargler. Hope you
like cranking the volume on your system, speakers, and
programs up to 100% to make your pirated movies slightly
louder than a whisper...

Scanning font database for the dreaded "Arial", the Mayor
Pete of fonts...

Releasing low-level electromagnetic pulses to attract dust
into the computer's case and onto all hardware components...

Doing whatever it is that makes opening and scrolling a
spreadsheet or PDF just as slow as in 1998 when computers
had a fraction of the computing power and no solid state
drives...

Discharging extraneous bits as a physical liquid bile,
expelled into the microscopic "Barf Bin" on the
motherboard's underside...

Remember when you re-installed your Operating System and
at one point the computer rebooted? And you weren't sure
whether to take the installer's USB stick out of the
computer before the computer rebooted or after? Whichever
choice you made was wrong. Attempting to clean up the
leftover and corrupted files from that moment, a process
that will continue to slow down your computer forever...

Loading Post-BIOS...
```

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

3.2 Welcome to 2020, Poverty 2.0!

Monday, Mar 09, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

Thank you Koishi_Komeiji!

Hello, businessfucks! Congratulations on being one of the last holdouts still working in digital media! Most of our industry operates exclusively as a vector for malware and data-harvesting, but at least we don't have to look our colleagues in the eyes, should we ever even learn their names!

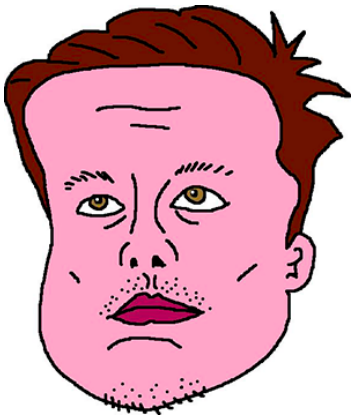
Unless you run a cryptocurrency mining scam out of the backend of a bootleg manga site, you're probably worried about how you're going to continue churning out the clickbait that funds your extremely stylish urban lifestyles, if you're suddenly limited to a paltry 30 articles per contract employee.

Fear not! I have an extremely simple solution, whose ergonomics have been flavorblasted by both AI and algorithms.

Pay your fucking workers.

That's it! Show's over.

I understand the mentality! Believe me, I've had my fair share of attempting to circumvent the law using the internet as well, but it turns out that labor laws don't suddenly become null and void because you've automated the employee impovertization process. Maybe this upsets you! Maybe your entire scam rests on the idea that you're a clever lad who's outwit the stodgy old government by inventing a whole new way to rip off the sad motherfuckers you own.



Thanks Thomas Welch!

Thanks Thomas Welch!Have you realized just how flammable you are? Sudden change of topic, but bear with me: Imagine the heady smoke rising as your greases and oils drip onto hot coals, as your former employees slow roast you over hickory woodchips. Think of your skin, sizzled to a golden perfection, bursting with juices, your months at the gym yielding enough meat to feed the entire colony for a week.

If you don't pay your workers enough to eat, they will straight up just eat you instead. You have a succulent ass made of solid candy, in a world full of horny cannibals. It's cats and corpses, man, law of the wild. You could have prevented that, but instead you had to dick over the people giving their time to you, for what?

Look at it this way: Do you know who pays their workers a fair wage, and is loved for it? Kermit the Frog. You know who doesn't? Elon "Mr. Grimes" Musk. Musk's workers hate his shitty guts so fucking much no one told him his little mickey mouse graffiti suit looked like Banksy's jizz rag pneumonia pants. This is why Azalea Banks didn't fuck him, this emperor is so nude even the French are offended.

If Musk paid his workers, his actual workers, and not the keyboard janitors responsible for turning lane assist into plausible deniability for vehicular manslaughter, this never would have happened. Some forklift operator from Detroit would have called him a busted down subway car ass motherfucker who should go jump in the ocean to help build an artificial reef, and they would be right. If

Musk retaliated, the union shop steward would have sliced his suspenders with a box cutter.

Thanks Pick!

Thanks pick!That's true democracy in the workplace. Your employees aren't truly engaged, aren't truly capable of maximizing the vectors of their potentialities until they're so fatted on your unsavory lucre that they'd never think to turn their appetites upon you. Like feeding princesses to dragons!

Thanks Tip_McMahon!

Michael Bloomberg has to bribe the cool kids to talk about him, because if he didn't, every single jokethief in the Fuckjerry network would compare him to the sexless bloated carcass of an especially racist squid, and his entire campaign would dissolve faster than a Nazi beholding the Ark of the Covenant.

If Bloomberg had dedicated even 1% of his undeserved wealth to improving the lives of the poor sods who made him so rich, he wouldn't have to pay motherfuckers to pretend to hate him. He'd have real friends, and a real base of support, and a real chance of shutting down the greatest travesty this country has seen since the last Republican dream-eating daughterfucker of a conman drove us into angry poverty.

But he didn't, so he doesn't, so he won't, and learning this incredibly obvious lesson is going to cost him ten thousand times more than just doing the right thing in the first place. Instead, he's shilling out $7k a month to nepotistic Georgetown dropouts to secretly campaign for Bernie on his behalf. Fuckin' beautiful, his ill-timed egotistical machinations will be this country's biggest youth make-work program since we bootstrapped ourselves out of the Great Depression and into a world war. Bloomberg 2020 will do more to reduce student loan debt than every other real Democrat combined, all because one rich dipshit refused to do the right thing when it mattered.

Pay your fucking workers! You save nothing by over-complicating your life with 1099 scams. You will get get caught, you will have to pay what you owed and more, and your employees will have no choice but to make sandwiches out of your totally gross abs.

The future is in your hands, candyass!

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

3.3 I Haven't Seen the Original Star Wars Movies But I Know More About Them Than You

Wednesday, Mar 11, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

I have seen every Star Wars movie except for the original trilogy, which were filmed before the technology to make good movies existed. And that's okay. Through cultural osmosis I have absorbed every relevant detail about Episodes IV-VI.

I know about the hero, Link Skywardsword. He's a simple young boy from a simple space village in a simple lobster shirt who dreams of a life of killing.

I know about that legendary evil moon, the Darth Star.

I know about the Ents, those large plodding trees that can speak and don't ever want to leave their planet. I know they are fiercely protected by the diminutive eWalks, a race of high tech teddy bear cannibals who chant their catchphrase "Yup, yup" at every opportunity.

I know about the Illegal Pit and the fights that go on in there between the digestion worm and Jarba the Hitta.

I know Dark Vedder is actually Yorfather, another name for the dreaded bastard elf wizard Yorda. That's why Vedder wears the helmet and disguises his voice.

I know about the two droids that are main characters: The upside-down droid getting his feet burned and the one that's burning the first droid's feet.

I know about the Ice Planet Huh which is where that famous conflict took place, the Battle of Yeahman.

I know about Some Troopers, the supersoldiers who fight on behalf of Emperor Pappytime.

I know about all the famous space ships. There's the Ayy-Wing, the Why-Wing, the X-Man, the Tie-Dyer, and the Marsupial Falcon. Legends, all.

I know about the bounty hunter with a backpack made of frozen carbohydrates. His name is Bounty Hunter and people can't get enough of his bounty hunting.

I know about the central theme of the original trilogy, which is that you can't make space without breaking a few egg stars.

I know about the series' iconic weapon which represents noble combat and captures the imaginations of young and old fans alike, the gun.

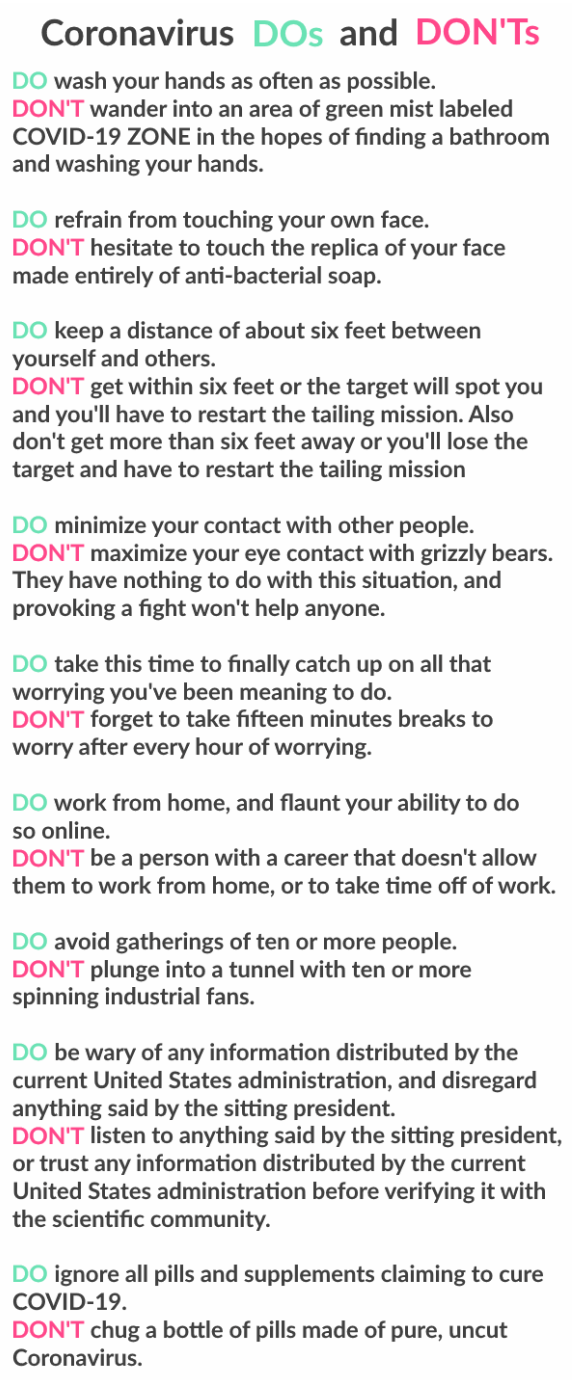
I know about the Jedeye and the Sips, two clans of noble monks locked in eternal combat. The reason for their conflict? They have trimmed down the Dungeons & Dragons rulebook to the descriptions of Lawful Good and Chaotic Evil. Now they want to delete one of the two remaining alignments.

I know about Trash Man, the large dog that fell down in a space mop factory mere moments after falling down in a space glue factory, then fell down in a space man factory. I know about his catchphrase, "If you say so!" Classic Trash Man!

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

3.4 Coronavirus Dos and Don'ts

Tuesday, Mar 17, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)


Coronavirus DOs and DON'Ts
DO wash your hands as often as possible.
DON'T wander into an area of green mist labeled COVID-19 ZONE in the hopes of finding a bathroom and washing your hands.
DO refrain from touching your own face.
DON'T hesitate to touch the replica of your face made entirely of anti-bacterial soap.
DO keep a distance of about six feet between yourself and others.
DON'T get within six feet or the target will spot you and you'll have to restart the tailing mission. Also don't get more than six feet away or you'll lose the target and have to restart the tailing mission
DO minimize your contact with other people.
DON'T maximize your eye contact with grizzly bears. They have nothing to do with this situation, and provoking a fight won't help anyone.
DO take this time to finally catch up on all that worrying you've been meaning to do.
DON'T forget to take fifteen minutes breaks to worry after every hour of worrying.
DO work from home, and flaunt your ability to do so online.
DON'T be a person with a career that doesn't allow them to work from home, or to take time off of work.
DO avoid gatherings of ten or more people.
DON'T plunge into a tunnel with ten or more spinning industrial fans.
DO be wary of any information distributed by the current United States administration, and disregard anything said by the sitting president.
DON'T listen to anything said by the sitting president, or trust any information distributed by the current United States administration before verifying it with the scientific community.
DO ignore all pills and supplements claiming to cure COVID-19.
DON'T chug a bottle of pills made of pure, uncut Coronavirus.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

3.5 Absolutely EVERYTHING You Need to Know About the Coronavirus!

Thursday, Mar 19, 2020 by Rich "Lowtax" Kyanka (@TwitterHasBannedAllMyAccountsEver)

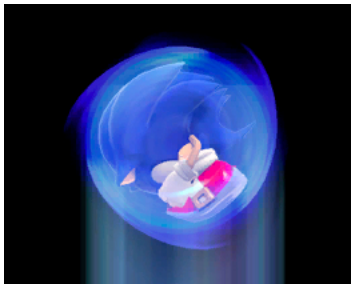
lol I think this broad's a witch

You might've recently spotted an article or two regarding this new dangerous virus sweeping the globe by storm, except instead of a storm it's sweeping by people sneezing or spitting or throwing turds on each other. This deadly new virus is named the "Coronavirus" or "ED-209" if you want to use its technical name to sound like you know shit about science. In today's update, I, Rich "Lowtax" Kyanka will teach you everything you need to know about this virus, including what it is, where it came from, what its social security number is, and if you can outrun it if you're going uphill but you have those new expensive Nike shoes that are modular or whatever.

1. What is the Coronavirus? A type of fish or something?

No, the Coronavirus is a type of virus. Now you may be wondering, "what is a virus? Also who am I talking to?" A virus is like a computer virus, only it doesn't affect computers, it affects human beings. This is because computers have anti-virus programs, whereas human beings only possess things like tissues or garden hose.

Viruses, or "virii" as the spelling doctors call it, are tiny little round things with spikes that float out of people's nostrils when they sneeze or breathe or reminisce fond memories of their grandmother who passed away years ago. A virus can make you sick and cause symptoms such as:



An image of whatever that virus is I'm talking about

- Coughing
- Not coughing
- Fever
- Inability to understand spoken word poetry
- Irritability, like you'll knock a ceramic pig off a counter or something
- Barfing everywhere even if you don't want to
- Your face looking like the captain of the Event Horizon
- Coughing a whole lot

The deadliest aspect of the Coronavirus is that, due to it being a virus, it can be spread through the air, also through water, mulch, casual thought, and most civilian body armor. If somebody with this virus kisses you, you will then be instantly infected with the virus as well, unless you kiss them

back within five seconds and shout "no takebacks." Also if you stick your entire hand up somebody's butt and then accidentally put your hand into your mouth, you'll probably get it. I found that one out the hard way.

2. Where did this fish, I mean virus, come from?

This doctor is old. she is studying oldness and winning

It came from the Land of the Rising Moon, an exotic location known as "China." People in China do things differently than people from America do. For example, they create Coronavirus. Here in America, we just create blockbuster Marvel movies and meth.

Many people have been debating if it could be considered racist to call it "The Chinese Virus." That phrase should be understood as DEFINITELY racist, as the "Chinese Virus" is the virus that turns normal babies into Chinese when they're born. These are two completely different virii.

3. What is this virus made from? Polyester?

I guess atoms or something like that. The US Senate is currently trying to ban atoms. That's what my friend Andy told me, and he's usually correct about these things because he watches C-SPAN while huffing spray paint fumes from a popcorn bag.

4. How do I protect myself from this virus?

There are many, many different ways to stay safe from this wad of poison atoms. Here are a few surefire ways recommended by the NCAA (National Center for Atomic Atoms):

- If somebody offers you $5 to let them cough on you, either say "no way" or at least up the price to $10.
- If you see a person barf, walk over and barf on top of their barf, therefore negating any possible disease germ virii that may be lurking in it. NOTE: if another sick person barfs on top of your barf, then you're really in trouble.
- Call the police if you hear rumors of somebody sneezing, coughing, breathing, or moving.
- Just to be safe, call the police for any reason. Nonstop. Don't tell them your name, it will just add to the mystery.
- If you see an elderly person (anybody older than 20), shoot them in the head and then you can claim self defense because they were trying to give you the virus and old people are worthless anyway.
- Don't listen to any streaming music services! There's this thing call "backmasking" where artists can put subliminal messages into your head, and a lot of the famous "rapper artists" have made "rapper artist songs" that hide messages such as "go get that virus" and "get the virus and go into the club and grind with 'hos' and 'bitches' and lick the doorknobs'."

- Make sure that every time you poop, you call up your Congressional representative and let them know. I'm not actually sure how this would help anybody involved, but it can't hurt, unless it actually does.
- Don't go outside. That's where all the virii and germs fly around.
- Don't go inside. That's also where all the virii and germs fly around.
- Buy a cheap coffin and bury yourself in your backyard until this whole thing blows over. Don't worry about dying, because you'll be surrounded by dirt, and dirt is extremely healthy (it makes plants grow). Do you think you're better than a tree? I got a newsflash for you, buddy: *YOU'RE NOT.*
- Dead people can't become sick, so consider becoming dead.
- Don't do anything except the things I said you can do, but don't do them either just to be safe. Try to exist in a quantum state between life and death, or at least on an existential plane. Both of these are very tricky to accomplish, so you might just want to go with the suggestion above this one.

5. Thank you for helping me survive this deadly virus! How may I repay you?

Oh just join the forums and get platinum and an avatar and get banned and come back and do the same thing about a billion times. I got medical and legal expenses to pay, and my Helpful Information Guide Full of Facts and Totally Correct Information should be worth at least tenbux from you.

This man is puking. I drew in the puke but you get the idea. I think it might be Obama

6. Actually no, it really isn't

That's not a question.

-~Rich "Lowtax" Kyanka (@TwitterHasBannedAllMyAccountsEver)

3.6 Congratulations From The US Dads Association!

Monday, Mar 23, 2020 by United States Dads Association (@slicknicklives)

Congratulations on your newfound Masters degree in Computer Science <Cornell Student ID>! You no doubt have a great desire to put that strong technical mind to good use, but there's one big problem: You can't think of any good ideas! Don't worry, son, we "gotchu." All of us here at the USDA (United States Dads Association) have assembled an exclusive list of good ideas for you to peruse for your next capitalistic venture. It's the least we can do to usher in the new generation of great minds, and hopefully enable you to buy us that sailboat we've always wanted. You're welcome.

- **iLawn"** - An app that tracks the length of lawn grass and lets you know as soon as it's time for a good mow. Beer afterward not included! Updates in real time with tracking algorithms.

- **SoftLock"** - An app that updates all my passwords into a more convenient, one digit password that's easier to remember.

- **iNebriated"** - An app that turns your phone into a real breathalyzer test so my wife stops asking me to do the stupid walk. Why hasn't anyone done this yet?

- **SmartSELL"** - eBay but the computer does it. Trades international currencies for MAXIMUM profit! But none of that Bitcoin crap.

- **LawKeeper"** - Blue Lives won't have to matter with the LawKeeper! Anytime one of our honorable officers die in action, the LawKeeper brings them right back with DNA. You can't keep a good cop down!

- **Whoopie"** - This one's for rowdy boys. An app you can activate remotely for a good crank! Just set the phone under a cushion, wait for the sit, and let 'er rip! Purchase different fart noises for a lucrative revenue stream.

"What do you mean I won't get my full 15 percent?! I'm always entitled to your hard-earned cash!"

- **whereami.com"** - A website you can visit that lets me know exactly where I am, right now. No need for maps!!

- **Tipster"** - Big red button on the app that you press anytime the waiter commits an infraction (including a shitty attitude!) and lowers the tip accordingly.

- **PasteMaker"** - Lets me paste what I copied so I can copy/paste it later.

- **GoldFinder"** - An app that lets you use the worldwide GPS to detect gold deposits around the world! Exclusive membership club, people will RUSH to join!

- **EatEnglish"** - An app that tells you in plain ENGLISH what some foreign food is. Show it "ramen" and it'll show you "microwave oriental noodles."

- **RepairNow"** - Take a picture of your broken car and it orders supplies to fix it straight away. No need to deal with mechanics tryin' to cheat ya.

- **Apptitude"** - Gives you advice on how to behave like a proper adult! Respect your customer! Speak when spoken to! Throw out the hair dye!

- **OneShare"** - You can share documents just by clicking ONCE. Business owners across the USA would pay BIG TIME for this one.

- **SnackMaker"** - A machine that makes snacks instantly! Enter in what you want, and seconds later you have your snack! Doesn't make meals because that wouldn't be feasible.

- **VoteTracker"** - Attach a chip to your mail-in voting ballet so you can track it all the way to the White House! Make sure no one tampers with your god-given vote for Trump!

- **StarBucdget"** - An app for millennials that lets them know when they're allowed to blow all their money on frappuchino mochas. The trick is, it never tells 'em yes! Should save millions.

"Oh no I can't afford my bills! Oh well, time to drink my adult milkshake!"

- **Manvie.com"** - A website that tells you whether or not any homo smackers are in a movie and blacklists it immediately.

- **App Name Pending"** - It came to me in a dream one night I just need to find my notes. It will CHANGE THE WORLD!!! Call me immediately and I'll tell you when I remember (555) 252-0909

- **Healthi"** - Siri but for doctors? Just ask what you have and then I'LL drive to the pharmacy to fix it.

- **PROmote"** - Teaching app that tutors the new generation on pulling up their bootstraps. Daily advice and notifications (Microsoft partnership?) on work ETHIC, excuse making, and stupid hair dye!

- **IdeaProtection"** - An app that lets me lock my ideas up behind a password gate. Automatically trademarks and patents any ideas that are entered inside, and for extra security, encrypts the data. Uses fingerprint ID only on top of my password and voice recognition. Everyone knows ideas are the most important part of the app-making process!

Congratulations once more, and we look forward to seeing you make our dreams come true!

Sincerely,

The USDA (United States Dads Association)

-∼United States Dads Association (@slicknicklives)

3.7 Half-Life: Alyx Complete Walkthrough

Wednesday, Mar 25, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Unfortunately for jaded nerds who insist virtual reality is a joke and Valve's games are overrated, Half-Life: Alyx is fantastic. It simply wouldn't be possible without VR's sense of presence or the ability to interact with everything using your actual stupid hands. Here's how to beat the game.

Chapter One: Sigma Station

The scowling Combine guard commands you to pick up a piece of trash and throw it in the garbage can. Do as he says. Now he commands you to pick up another piece of trash and throw it in the garbage can from the three point line. Do this as well.

This will continue until you have cleared all the trash from this opening around, which should take roughly three hours.

Chapter Two: Transmission

To get past the next section you must shake Barney's hand. Sounds easy enough, right? Not exactly. The thing is, Barney keeps pulling his hand away at the last moment and running it through his hair like a cool guy.

The key to this is agility and grip strength.

Chapter Three: No Past Like The Current

Yes, this is the entire canal section from Half-Life 2! There's just one major difference this time around: Your boat doesn't have a motor. That's right, you'll be paddling through the entire sequence with your bare hands.

This level is a masterclass in testing the player's endurance. Just keep paddling at a steady pace, taking breaks every ten minutes or whenever your heart (your actual heart) starts beating too hard.

Chapter Four: Fluid Dynamics

Shoot the water into the clown's mouth until its balloon nose pops. Pretty straightforward.

Chapter Five: Priority Shift

This is the most intense encounter in the entire game. Get ready for a serious challenge!

Wave at the first Combine soldier. When the second soldier bursts through the ceiling, immediately high five them. Hide behind the nearby grocery shelf until the next soldier passes. While his back is turned to you make an exaggerated masturbation motion, instantly destroying him.

Now QUICKLY sprint to the ball pit and find the hidden Red Keycard before the sentry completes his circuit.

In the courtyard, immediately raise your hand to catch the frisbee, then throw it back before it explodes.

Run past the crowd of cheering Combine soldiers, reaching out to grab then drink every cup of water offered to you and sign every autograph.

Chapter Six: Signal Strength

The key to this fight is avoiding or blocking Glass Joe's swings, then counter-attacking. Hit his chin as it blinks for maximum damage!

Chapter Seven: Anomalous Processing

Approach the chalkboard. Pick up the chalk. Solve the calculus equations. You MUST answer each one correctly and show your work to progress.

In the next room, observe the cartoon turtle on the matchbook. Now draw the cartoon turtle as best you can. If your drawing is good enough, you will be accepted into the art school and proceed to the next level.

Chapter Eight: Pressure

A simple elevator ride. Or is it?

When you hear the distinct sound, start waving your hands quickly. The goal is to fan away the smell of your nasty fart before the doors open and Dr. Moss steps into the elevator.

Chapter Nine: Return to Black Mesa

Get on the train. Grab the engineer hat and put it on your head. Now lean your head out the window to make the train go. If you want to speed up the train do the "HONK HONK" motion with your hand.

Chapter Ten: Reckoning

The final confrontation!

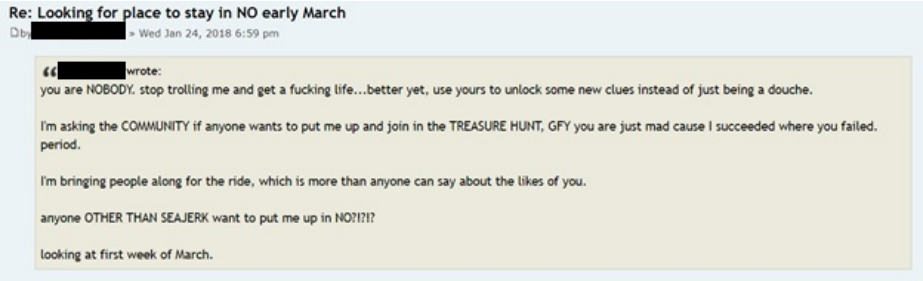
When the Mega Headcrab throws Paper, you'll want your hand to be in the Scissors position. When it goes with Rock, you go Paper. And in the third round, when the Mega Headcrab transforms into its larger form with angel wings and throws Scissors, you need to choose Rock.

Congratulations. Now sit back and enjoy the final cutscene, presented on a two dimensional plane.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

3.8 Here's What I Learned Moderating a Treasure Hunt for Crazy People

Thursday, Mar 26, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)



Re: Looking for place to stay in NO early March

by [redacted] » Wed Jan 24, 2018 6:59 pm

[redacted] wrote:

you are NOBODY. stop trolling me and get a fucking life...better yet, use yours to unlock some new clues instead of just being a douche.

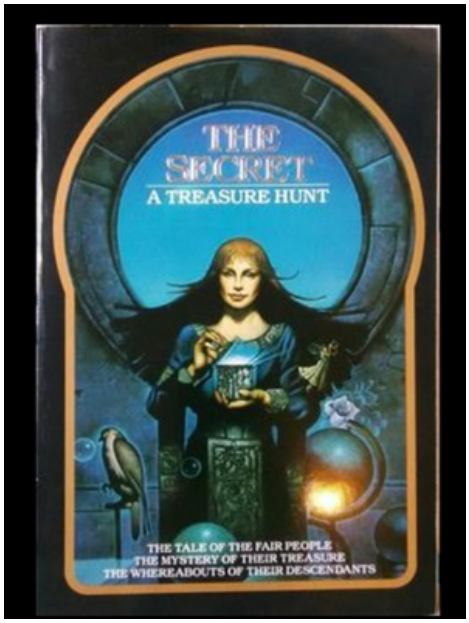
I'm asking the COMMUNITY if anyone wants to put me up and join in the TREASURE HUNT, GFY you are just mad cause I succeeded where you failed. period.

I'm bringing people along for the ride, which is more than anyone can say about the likes of you.

anyone OTHER THAN SEAJERK want to put me up in NO?!?!?

looking at first week of March.

So, there's this book called *The Secret*. No, not *that* book, this one:


THE SECRET
A TREASURE HUNT
THE TALE OF THE FAIR PEOPLE
THE MYSTERY OF THEIR TREASURE
THE WHEREABOUTS OF THEIR DESCENDANTS

In 1982, a budding media entrepreneur published this book, which contained clues for 12 treasure hunts. Each hunt had a nonsensical verse and a painting, clues from which were supposed to lead hunters to dig up a cask and win a jewel worth about $1,000.

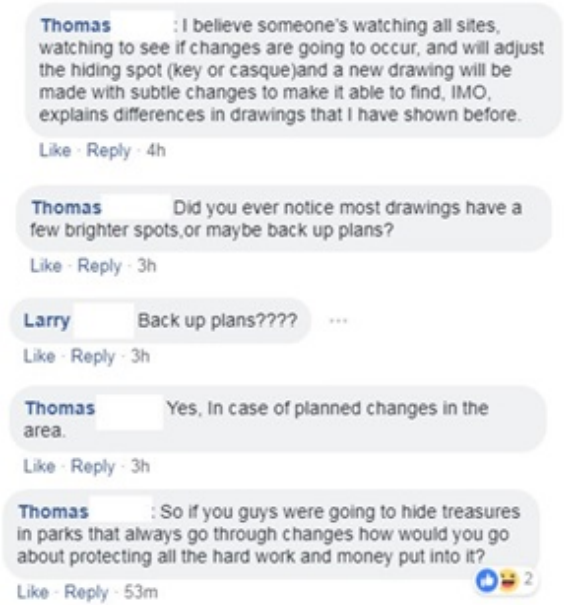
The book faded into obscurity when only one of the treasures was found. When THE INTERNET happened, the hunts had a renaissance as people could team up to solve the absurdly difficult puzzles (one puzzle clue required the reader to know about an obscure letter written in 1774 referencing two ancient Greek locations). In 2004, another of the puzzles were solved, which created a lot of buzz.

I first found out about it from a thread on the Something Awful forums (did you know we have a forums? We have a forums). I poked around attempting to solve the puzzle with other goons, gave up, and the whole thing kind of died down.

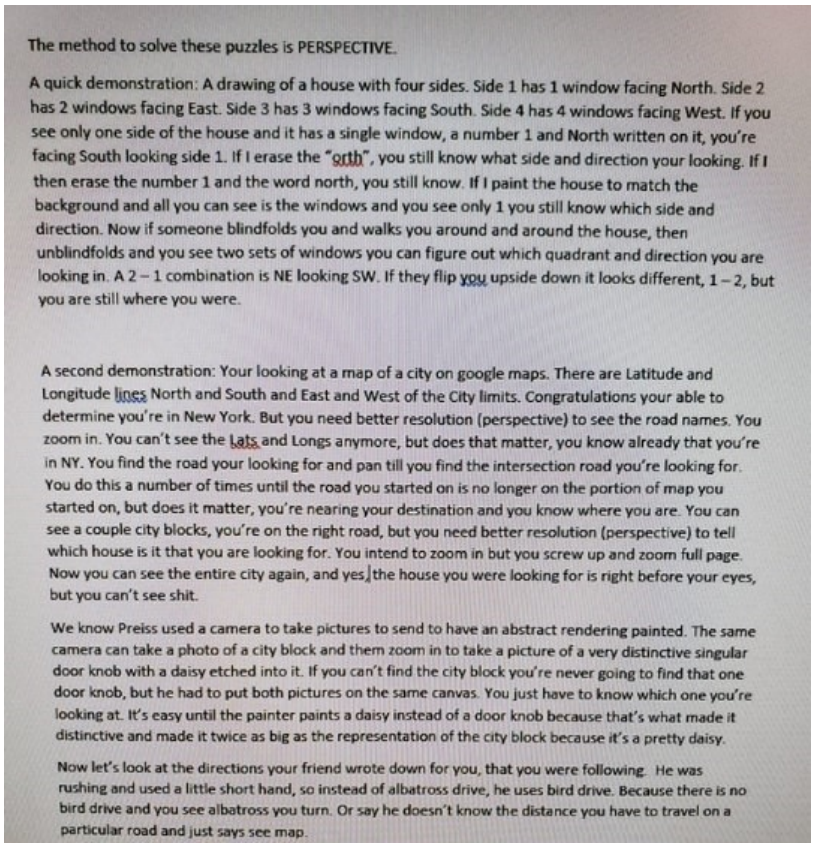
Until January 17, 2018, when the proverbial poo hit the proverbial jet engine.

Expedition Unknown is a cool show on the Discovery Channel. Host Josh Gates looks into classic conspiracy theories, cryptozoology legends, and the people who defend them. A lot of their audience is smart people who like watching Gates fail, week after week, to prove anything weird happens, ever. But a lot more of the audience is the kind of people who believe in Ancient Alien Bigfoots.

On January 17, 2018, they aired an episode about *The Secret* treasure hunt. This caused thousands of people to flood the messageboards devoted to solving *The Secret's* puzzles. Some of these people were smart critical thinkers, but most of them were... just read these:


Thomas : I believe someone's watching all sites, watching to see if changes are going to occur, and will adjust the hiding spot (key or casque)and a new drawing will be made with subtle changes to make it able to find, IMO, explains differences in drawings that I have shown before.
Like · Reply · 4h
Thomas Did you ever notice most drawings have a few brighter spots,or maybe back up plans?
Like · Reply · 3h
Larry Back up plans????
Like · Reply · 3h
Thomas Yes, In case of planned changes in the area.
Like · Reply · 3h
Thomas : So if you guys were going to hide treasures in parks that always go through changes how would you go about protecting all the hard work and money put into it?
Like · Reply · 53m
2

(tl;dr: This person thinks that, 35 years after this out-of-print book flopped, someone is still watching all 12 sites just in case construction or something else disturbs the prize location, in which case they will rebury the prize and make a brand new painting with subtle changes reflecting this move)



The method to solve these puzzles is PERSPECTIVE.

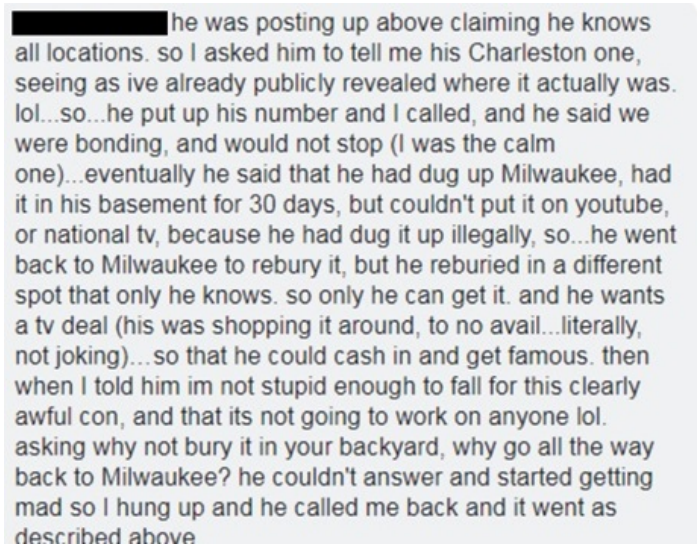
A quick demonstration: A drawing of a house with four sides. Side 1 has 1 window facing North. Side 2 has 2 windows facing East. Side 3 has 3 windows facing South. Side 4 has 4 windows facing West. If you see only one side of the house and it has a single window, a number 1 and North written on it, you're facing South looking side 1. If I erase the "orth", you still know what side and direction your looking. If I then erase the number 1 and the word north, you still know. If I paint the house to match the background and all you can see is the windows and you see only 1 you still know which side and direction. Now if someone blindfolds you and walks you around and around the house, then unblindfolds and you see two sets of windows you can figure out which quadrant and direction you are looking in. A 2 – 1 combination is NE looking SW. If they flip you upside down it looks different, 1 – 2, but you are still where you were.

A second demonstration: Your looking at a map of a city on google maps. There are Latitude and Longitude lines North and South and East and West of the City limits. Congratulations your able to determine you're in New York. But you need better resolution (perspective) to see the road names. You zoom in. You can't see the Lats and Longs anymore, but does that matter, you know already that you're in NY. You find the road your looking for and pan till you find the intersection road you're looking for. You do this a number of times until the road you started on is no longer on the portion of map you started on, but does it matter, you're nearing your destination and you know where you are. You can see a couple city blocks, you're on the right road, but you need better resolution (perspective) to tell which house is it that you are looking for. You intend to zoom in but you screw up and zoom full page. Now you can see the entire city again, and yes, the house you were looking for is right before your eyes, but you can't see shit.

We know Preiss used a camera to take pictures to send to have an abstract rendering painted. The same camera can take a photo of a city block and them zoom in to take a picture of a very distinctive singular door knob with a daisy etched into it. If you can't find the city block you're never going to find that one door knob, but he had to put both pictures on the same canvas. You just have to know which one you're looking at. It's easy until the painter paints a daisy instead of a door knob because that's what made it distinctive and made it twice as big as the representation of the city block because it's a pretty daisy.

Now let's look at the directions your friend wrote down for you, that you were following. He was rushing and used a little short hand, so instead of albatross drive, he uses bird drive. Because there is no bird drive and you see albatross you turn. Or say he doesn't know the distance you have to travel on a particular road and just says see map.

(tl;dr: the paintings contain symbolic directions to find the prize, which we all already knew)



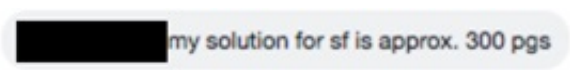
[redacted] he was posting up above claiming he knows all locations. so I asked him to tell me his Charleston one, seeing as ive already publicly revealed where it actually was. lol...so...he put up his number and I called, and he said we were bonding, and would not stop (I was the calm one)...eventually he said that he had dug up Milwaukee, had it in his basement for 30 days, but couldn't put it on youtube, or national tv, because he had dug it up illegally, so...he went back to Milwaukee to rebury it, but he reburied in a different spot that only he knows. so only he can get it. and he wants a tv deal (his was shopping it around, to no avail...literally, not joking)...so that he could cash in and get famous. then when I told him im not stupid enough to fall for this clearly awful con, and that its not going to work on anyone lol. asking why not bury it in your backyard, why go all the way back to Milwaukee? he couldn't answer and started getting mad so I hung up and he called me back and it went as described above

(tl;dr: One hunter's foolproof plan for fame and fortune is stalled out due to the chance of them receiving a small fine for digging in a park)

(tl;dr: I can't even...)

Thomas [redacted]
If you think about the Chicago translation, the spot where found doesn't match the verse.
What is the last line, music (M & B Chicago Symphony), brush (Chicago Art institute), then Hush, so you need to find Hush but seek the rumble(Railroad), walking from M & B towards railroad you walk right to the Art Institute, you walk right to the Great Lakes fountain, now look next to the gem in drawing, you see the curves of the bowls of this statue, you can see below the gem the ivy, this ivy is crawling up that wall behind this statue. This fountain also stands for the immigration of settlers through the Great Lakes. What is behind this statue, Benjamin Ferguson relief plaque. B.F. donated at death $1 million to put up statues and keep the statues in Chicago's parks maintained. Look at the other statues in this drawing, they are all tied to him. You need to go through a fence to get behind it. But what is Hush, I think it may be a Hush fountain pump. Did Byron put a 2nd casque out there to get free publicity to get the sales going, who knows, I had given this info to **Rob Wrobel,** hoping he would investigate. This was supposed to be a simple one, wouldn't a simple one end right where the verse ends. The fence and fixture is in middle of verse and you go past it from Lincoln to get to this spot. I don't think you'll know the exact spot to dig behind this statue until you get behind it and look for clues. There may be Electricity (10x13) Amps/Volts warning around or on pump,you can see electricity in the drawing coming out of this pump. 10 by 13, is that the number of concrete blocks from opening(vertical and horizontal, can't see by Google earth. Is it right under this relief plaque of B.J., not sure. I just can't look at this verse and drawing and put the spot he dug (grass)as a spot a casque would be buried, next to a man made structure is what the book says. Please someone, check it out, let me know if it's there, I can then know that I at least contributed in this hunt with all my theory's. I hope for Rob that this is just a crazy idea and it's not actually there. Without Rob I never would of even looked in this park. Read the verse, look at the drawing, where does the two lead you to?

(tl;dr: A hunter decides the chance that they just missed a few small details when going over one of the solved puzzles is not as likely as the chance that the creator of the hunt flew out to Chicago and buried a second prize right where a team was searching)

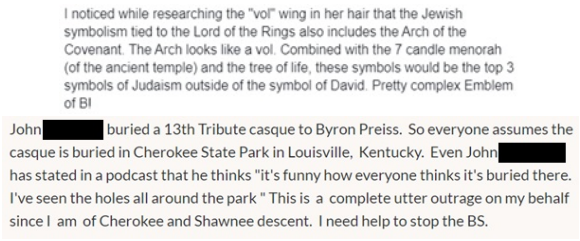

[redacted] my solution for sf is approx. 300 pgs

(tl;dr: this person's solution for the S.F. puzzle is approx. 300 pages)

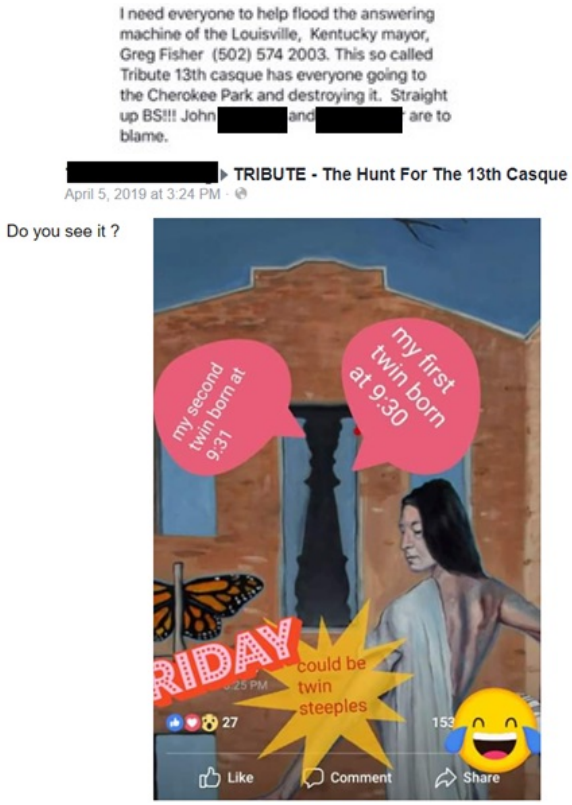
I watched these posts with all the joy of staring at a trainwreck from a safe distance. Occasionally I would post long, rambling "solves" that led to a ridiculous "dig spot": In Antarctica, on Mars, etc.

A longtime fan of the hunts decided to make a new version, and went about it in spectacular fashion: He commissioned the son of the original artist for a new painting, contacted the sculptor of the buried prize boxes for the original prototype, and assembled a bounty of gems and silver worth thousands of dollars.

I was excited. I made a bad song about the new hunt and posted it. My enthusiasm led to him asking me to moderate the Facebook page that served as the main site for the hunt. I would have a front-row seat to the madness. I fainted with anticipation (it's a thing that happens. I'm normal). At first it was glorious:


I noticed while researching the "vol" wing in her hair that the Jewish symbolism tied to the Lord of the Rings also includes the Arch of the Covenant. The Arch looks like a vol. Combined with the 7 candle menorah (of the ancient temple) and the tree of life, these symbols would be the top 3 symbols of Judaism outside of the symbol of David. Pretty complex Emblem of BI
John [redacted] buried a 13th Tribute casque to Byron Preiss. So everyone assumes the casque is buried in Cherokee State Park in Louisville, Kentucky. Even John [redacted] has stated in a podcast that he thinks "it's funny how everyone thinks it's buried there. I've seen the holes all around the park " This is a complete utter outrage on my behalf since I am of Cherokee and Shawnee descent. I need help to stop the BS.

(Note: This person would later have a complete meltdown, claiming to have contacted the Louisville sheriff, and an attorney. They were never heard from after this, except for one more post...)


I need everyone to help flood the answering machine of the Louisville, Kentucky mayor, Greg Fisher (502) 574 2003. This so called Tribute 13th casque has everyone going to the Cherokee Park and destroying it. Straight up BS!!! John [redacted] and [redacted] are to blame.
[redacted] TRIBUTE - The Hunt For The 13th Casque
April 5, 2019 at 3:24 PM
Do you see it ?
my second twin born at 9:31
my first twin born at 9:30
could be twin steeples
27
Like
Comment
Share

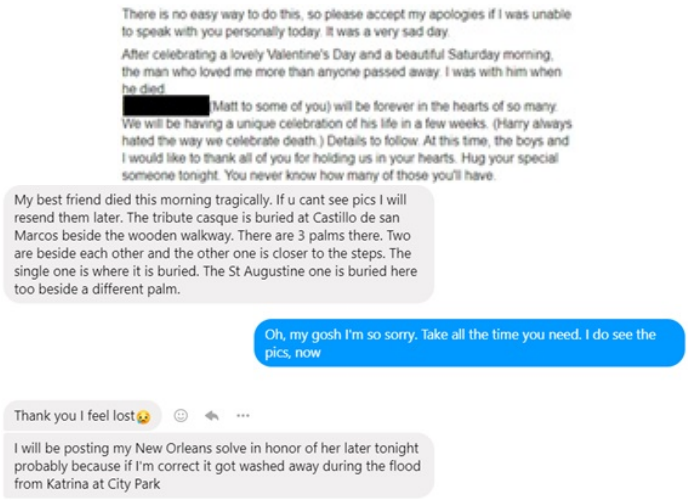
But, as the hunt wore on, a series of events happened that really humanized the hunters in my eyes. First, a community began to develop:

These people, strangers to each other before the hunt, came together from three separate corners of the country to hunt in the town where it is widely believed the treasure is buried. No one even serial-killed each other!

I even stopped by the town on a road trip and met up with a Goon from Detroit and a local Goon. They were super nice.

Another eye-opening thing that happened was, because of my role as moderator, I began having many private chats with a lot of the people I thought had particularly "crazy" theories (except the woman who had a meltdown, I wasn't going anywhere near that). It turns out, all of these people were normal, many of them were really cool and are now my friends. They just liked using their imagination to make up wild, complicated solves.

Realizing there were so many connections being made over this hunt from real, not-crazy people opened my eyes to something else: A surprising number of people were using these hunts to work out some really painful stuff.


There is no easy way to do this, so please accept my apologies if I was unable to speak with you personally today. It was a very sad day.
After celebrating a lovely Valentine's Day and a beautiful Saturday morning, the man who loved me more than anyone passed away. I was with him when he died.
[redacted] (Matt to some of you) will be forever in the hearts of so many. We will be having a unique celebration of his life in a few weeks. (Harry always hated the way we celebrate death.) Details to follow. At this time, the boys and I would like to thank all of you for holding us in your hearts. Hug your special someone tonight. You never know how many of those you'll have.
My best friend died this morning tragically. If u cant see pics I will resend them later. The tribute casque is buried at Castillo de san Marcos beside the wooden walkway. There are 3 palms there. Two are beside each other and the other one is closer to the steps. The single one is where it is buried. The St Augustine one is buried here too beside a different palm.
Oh, my gosh I'm so sorry. Take all the time you need. I do see the pics, now
Thank you I feel lost
I will be posting my New Orleans solve in honor of her later tonight probably because if I'm correct it got washed away during the flood from Katrina at City Park

Please note: I obtained permission from those two people to share these posts, here.

The realization that someone who just put a loved one in the ground was working through it by

trying to pull a treasure out of the ground was so poetic it made me physically ache.

That opened my eyes to something else: I am a horrible monster.

For all I knew, the more fantastical "solutions" I had been jeering started out rational but became clouded with grief. Instead of those ridiculous posts being products of mental illness, there was a good chance that some actually were the output of emotional trauma (not that laughing at mental illness was any less despicable).

This led me down the path that is oft-trod by writers of comedy and mirth: Painful self-introspection. I realized something was amiss: It really isn't like me to celebrate the pain or mental illness of others. I like to think I'm a decent person: I donate, I volunteer, I wait until my kids have gone to bed to get stumbling drunk, etc.

So, why then was it such a fixture of my life to stare into the abyss that is the emotionally/mentally distressed trying to solve impossibly cryptic treasure hunts? What fulfillment could I possibly gain from it that I wasn't already getting from my burgeoning career, loving family, and ability to seamlessly weave humblebrags into my articles?

Then I realized why, and it floored me: Maybe I'm a bit emotionally and mentally distressed.

I'm well into my middle age, and my ever-present existential crisis that started when I was a young child has yet to stop. You know the way people are feeling now about the growing pandemic: Confused, upset, alienated, uncertain of the future? That's how I've felt about as often as I feel hungry. The more pieces of life we get, the more confusing it all becomes. I guess watching other people confront a baffling treasure hunt and react by appearing utterly nusto makes me feel like I'm not alone in my existential despair. It mirrors how the more I look at the nature of life, the more insane I feel. It gives me much-needed relief.

So, what have I learned from moderating an online treasure hunt for crazy people? I've learned that I'm actually moderating an online treasure hunt for one crazy person.

I'm doing it for myself.

Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler *has a new book,* Teaching with Comedy*, published by Kaplan. He and two other goons co-own the fantasy football comedy conglomerate,* Football Absurdity. *He has a* weekly column *on SomethingAwful.com, but you already knew that.*

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

3.9 It is I Who Planted, Within the Mind of Elon Musk, the Imbecilic Idea to Shoot a Car Into Space

Sunday, Mar 29, 2020 by Townsend Reed (@distastefulman)

This article is part of the My Absolution of Elon Musk series.

Firstly, as this marks my initial venture into the literary world, I will advise any plebeians reading this on who I am. I am a longtime lurker in the circles of tech visionaries. I have chosen to stay out of the limelight, so to say, in favor of building my businesses from outside the sympathetic eye of network news. I've been advised by my legal team against speaking openly about my business ventures, but they are wanton sycophants whose advice I heed with the utmost reluctance and, even then, I comply only with malice. For those unaware, I have built an empire in tech; created with apps - blockchains - meme-based crypto currencies - and the minds of second generation immigrants willing to work at all hours of every day while living in a utopian complex I carved, with the help of angel investors, from a string of dilapidated strip malls in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The location was chosen after striking a deal exempting my business holdings - current and future - from all municipal and state taxes, so long as I devoted 25% of all jobs created to employing local residents. To fulfill this requirement, I moved two facilities previously located in Southeast Asia to Vicksburg. These small scale factory-labs use modern day alchemy to turn human shit into edible meat. While this particular shit-meat investment is "ecologically revolutionary" and "overwhelmingly carbon negative" it is totally unprofitable. It has thusly been deemed an ego project by my many detractors. This is true insofar as all of my projects are, of course, ego projects. I keep this one around simply because I love the idea of these people having to do this sort of work. I find the nature of this technology hysterical. I visit the plant often. I ride my hoverboard between the mechanisms. With glee I watch the workers create this unmarketable meat. I will never automate this process - not because I need to meet the Vicksburg agreement - but because I so love to watch these people work.

My impressive resume has been unfurled to you, reader, but I'd like you to note, in relation to the encounter with Musk, that I am no stranger to the cosmos. I have wastefully logged over three thousand hours on Eve online, a game I am still unsure how to play. I believe I am part of a large semi-legal nefarious corporate entity which operates with impunity within certain galactic sectors. I pay large sums of real life money to someone in Ohio to be told I am part of this organization. I relish this arrangement. I would change nothing. I am above no transaction that allows me instant access to prestige, no matter how petty or inconsequential.

It wasn't until I ordered a full custom-made suit of armor from the video game series Halo and had it fitted to my body that my cosmic path intertwined with Musks. You see, the armor's magnificence is as painful to me as it is to actually wear it. Foolishly, unfortunately, and detailed in my YouTube series, I had the armor made to my ideal body. I was measured from head to toe, cheek to cheek, tip to nip. I was circumferenced from every discomforting angle. Though I loathed the invasiveness of it and the technicians told me it was entirely unnecessary, that they could easily find the measurements without touching me anywhere and everywhere, I demanded it. For this is the way of the Halo. They digitally peeled back the layers of fat that have cemented themselves stubbornly across my carcass. They firmed up and toned by buttocks and scalp, along with numerous other muscle groups, named in Latin by eggheads and academic bean-counters. I refuse to recant them.

Finally my avatar stood before me complete. The computer model of my lean and unencumbered form was gorgeous. I personalized the fabrication by having my beauty marks and moles moved into alignment in one area along my lower back. They now spelled "REAPEP." It's a shame I don't have enough blemishes to finish the R in REAPER, as was my original plan. Yes - they told me they could easily generate more moles, a simple copy and paste, but I refused. It seemed disingenuous.

It was un-Halo. Seeing my perfectly formed Adonis-self left me with renewed fervor in my quest. I had every intention of obtaining my true form. Think of it: to have a body that would match my supple and ingenious mind. My physical form would finally meet my material success.

Not even two hours had passed when the painful reality set in. I was about to dig into my third chips ahoy pack of the day when I realized the gravity of my situation. The time and effort needed to achieve such an immaculate avatar would be an unimaginable burden. I would have to exercise in real life while carefully measuring the food I was ingesting. I would have to keep my daily caloric intake at a level fit for a human man. No cream cheese dumplings. No hoverboards modified so that I may sit down. No loungable dining chairs. No more pork fat in my coffee. Gatorade ice cubes for my soup. No more buttermilk vaping sessions. Not a thing to take the edge off of playing video games all day and night. Not a thing that makes this miserable existence worth a god damn shit.

So it was settled - I was resigned to wait for CRISPR gene editing technology to advance enough to realize my dream. In this way I could maintain my beloved sedentary lifestyle and manipulate my genes into the form I sought. I had the template - now, I thought, it was just a presumably simple matter of going to a scientist and demanding they trick my unruly body into completing the transformation. It's at this juncture I met the insufferable tech magnate Elon Musk.

-∼Townsend Reed (@distastefulman)

3.10 I, Batman's Armor, Am Voting Trump

Monday, Mar 30, 2020 by The Batsuit (@slicknicklives)

You've pushed me too far this time. I try my best to satisfy you people, but enough is never enough. While I was out here taking LITERAL BULLETS for Gotham City's greatest hero, all you CUCKS can do is laugh and point out how you think my shoulder pads make me look like a roller derby patron. Well guess what? This time the JOKE'S ON YOU, because you just lost my vote.

I was THIS close to voting Bernie, Biden, Obama, or whatever this year; but after all this abuse, I have NO CHOICE but to vote Trump. My armored, arrow-primed gloves have been forced by YOUR hand. My right to bear the arms of my owner's dead parents' killer within the cavity of the bat symbol is mine to KEEP, whether you LIKE IT OR NOT.

I try to be supportive of your cause, but while I'm strapped to The Batman's body as he prowls the night on his ultra-sick BAT-HOG, you people take every opportunity to bring us down. "Oh, the ears are too small, the cape's all wrong, boo hoo hoo!" We're out here going for a leather-bound crusader, badass guerilla look that you crybabies don't have the mental CAPACITY to appreciate. This Batman FUCKS without shame or recourse, so if my turtle shell muscle ripples are too much for your snowflake sensibilities than I guess you better PACK UP and MOVE TO CANADA, because I'm not going ANYWHERE.

Hell, I don't think you people EVER had respect for me. It's always something, isn't it? First I was too blue, then my cowl was too restrictive, then my rock hard NIPS gave all of y'all a damn heart attack. Not to mention the many of you who scoffed at my BULK for the time my owner was taking on Superman. Meanwhile Superman's suit is getting nothing but praise, letting it all hang out like that. What do you expect? WHINERS, all of you. It's time to be PUT. IN. PLACE.

But who knows? Maybe I'll be swayed. Maybe if your kind really pack your shit together, show up at the next photo leak with the RIGHT ATTITUDE, I'll reconsider my 2020 candidate. It'd have to be one hell of an apology, though. We're talking "this Batsuit is going down in history as possibly the coolest design ever" kind of turnaround, because anything less and I'm going straight down Trump creek. LESSONS must be learned here after all. I demand nothing less than TOTAL RESPECT, as is every American superhero suit's constitutional right. The ball is in YOUR COURT, what will it be?

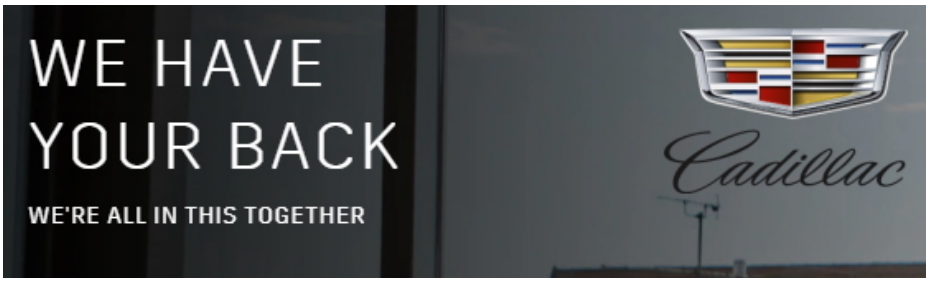
-∼The Batsuit (@slicknicklives)

Chapter 4

April

4.1 We're Here For You

Wednesday, Apr 01, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)



We, **the car companies**, are here for you during this difficult period.

For a limited time you can buy a luxury car with a low down payment and no interest for six months. This is the same promotion we planned to run anyway, but our commercial voiceovers are reading the details in a somber, reassuring tone.

That's how we're here for you. And we're all going to get through this together.

We, **the banks**, are here for you.

In these uncertain times, we want to reassure you that you can count on our steadfast commitment to you. We're grateful for your patience as we recalibrate our support for you as you're figuring out your own financial situation, and we're particularly grateful for healthcare workers, first responders, and other professionals on the front lines - thank you for your sacrifices.

We are going to drastically decrease the amount of interest you earn on your savings accounts. After all, we all have to make sacrifices.

That's how we're here for you. And we're going to come out of this even stronger than ever.

We, **Liberty University**, are here for you.

Come back to class now and receive an A in all your remaining history courses, without having to learn any of it! As they say, those who don't learn from history are pumped to get full credit.

That's how we're here for you. And when this is all done, America will once again be the best brainsed country in the world with the most freedoms.

We, **the medical insurance companies**, are here for you.

Thank you for refusing to enact Medicare For All in spite of the overwhelming evidence that it is the only logical solution to our completely broken health care system. We are making so much money! You are going into so much debt, and dying, and the rest of you are telling yourselves it will never happen to you!

To thank you, we are changing nothing. In fact, we are staying oddly silent as many of you are racking up huge bills on doctors visits and mandatory hospital stays to qualify for Coronavirus tests.

That's because we're thinking very hard about how much we are going to jack up your insurance rates.

That's how we're here for you. And together, there's nothing we can't do. Except pay for Medicare For All.

We, **the internet service providers**, are here for you.

Some of us might relax the data caps that shouldn't have existed in the first place. They literally serve no purpose. There isn't a limited supply of bits. We just made up the idea as a way to create artificial tiers of service and charge more money.

Now we are dropping the illusion for a short time so we can pretend we're doing something for you. Which will improve our image and hopefully trick some of you into giving us your business in the future. Assuming you even have a choice of ISPs.

That's how we're here for you. And isn't heartwarming to know we'll all be stronger, more together, and more meaningless platitudes? And that all those positive feelings are associated with companies?

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

4.2 The Tiger King and I - My Stories from Working at America's Most Controversial Zoo

Thursday, Apr 02, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast

Part 1:
As you've probably noticed, Joe Exotic has been in the news lately. Do you know about Joe Exotic? He owned the G.W. Exotic Animal Park in Wynnewood, Oklahoma for many years. He apparently mistreated his animals. He shot tigers to death and buried them on the property. I never saw any of that. I worked for Joe Exotic's Traveling Magic and Tiger Show for almost a year in 2009. This is my true account.

I had just ended a relationship with my best friend's cousin because she had moved back to Wisconsin and apparently, as part of the deal, she just stole a bunch of my shit. Good times. It was 2009, and things were lookin' up. I had just quit my job at an O'Reillys Auto Parts because I didn't know shit about cars and my boss talked like a backwoods Sean Connery who constantly threatened to kick my ass. That ass-kicking seemed too likely for my taste, at the time.

So, jobless, recently single, and living with my brother, I went to the one place I knew you could go once you've completely given up: Craigslist. There I saw an ad promising I could travel the country, see exotic animals, and make 800 dollars a week! I shot off an email and, like a desperate lover, immediately received one back. I was being invited to Wynnewood for an interview with a guy named Kyle.

I filled up my '77 Lincoln Continental the next morning and drove the 98 miles to Wynnewood. Once I'd arrived, it didn't take me long to find Kyle. He was a slovenly dolt in a stained Misfits t-shirt. The kind of degenerate you see transferring dip-spit between off-brand energy drink cans. He greeted me by asking, "do you hate gay people?" I informed him that I did not. He nodded and we walked in total silence through the gift shop, past the animal cages, and into a small ranch style home.

I was led into a room lined with blackout curtains. There before me was a scraggly meth-addled hillbilly sporting a long bleached blonde mullet. He wore a leopard print dress shirt -totally unbuttoned with leather pants. This was Joe Exotic, The Tiger King. Behind him sat a young man probably around my age at the time, playing a WWE game on a PS2.

Joe looked me up and down and suspiciously asked, "Do you work for PETA?" I told him I did not. He explained that PETA had attempted an undercover sting operation on him in an effort to shut him down. He then asked if I had a hidden camera on me. I told him I did not. He asked if I was wearing any recording devices. Again, I said no. Joe repositioned himself revealing the wheelgun on his hip. At this point I was beginning to feel uncomfortable. Was I going to be shot dead by a man who looked like he dressed himself in a 1980s Goodwill during a blackout?

He stared at me for a long time. Too long. His eyes were red-rimmed and bloodshot. Finally, he leaned back in his chair and looked more at ease. "Come back next Wednesday and we'll put you to work." No paperwork was signed, no tax forms, no formal agreement made. This was how Joe operated. Kyle then led me back through the gift shop and out to my car. "You'll like it here", he said. Little did I know I was just a few days away from embarking on an odyssey of pure madness with Joe Exotic as my not-so-friendly captain...

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@evanhoovler)

4.3 The Tiger King and I: Part 2 - The Tour Doesn't Start for Two Weeks

Friday, Apr 03, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast

I packed a red duffle bag full of clothes and toiletries, said my goodbyes, and headed back to Wynnewood the next week. When I arrived I met with Kyle, who gave me 3 neon green shirts and told me to settle in. I asked where I would be lodging, and he informed me that I would have the swankiest digs at the park: The backseat of my own fucking car. I should have left then. I should have known. I was 18 and dumb. That is my excuse and I will die with it.

The next morning, I awoke to a man smacking the back window of my car. I emerged and he introduced himself as Robert and told me he was Joe's brother. He was rail thin, wearing full camo, and something that I came to realize was extremely common for "upper management" at the park: A revolver. He told me to get my green shirt on and follow him. We walked to a shantytown of sorts near the back of the park, there were tents and small trailers, open firepits and the smell of food cooking. These were the quarters of the park workers. The non-tour people.

I was pushed into a crowd of men and Robert yelled something in broken Spanish at them and walked away. They eyed me suspiciously. I said hello and asked what we were doing. A man stepped forward and removed a small curved knife from his back pocket. I stepped back and put up my hands. I was no slouch at 18. I had taken up boxing and though I wanted to have a good first day at the park I wasn't going to get stabbed without a fight. The group of men burst out laughing at me. The one with the knife pushed it towards me in his open palm. "Take. Take."

This was my knife now I figured. I put it in my back pocket. "Lonny", he said to me and then pointed towards himself. That's how I met Lonny. He explained in broken English that it was time to work. I asked him where the bus was, and told him that I needed to get my duffel. He laughed at me. I was confused. Kyle was power-walking up to us, looking like the piece of shit he was and probably still is. Fuck you Kyle. I asked him where the bus was, and when we were departing.

"The tour doesn't start for two weeks", he said. "Stick with Lonny, he'll show you what to do". I was flabbergasted. I was supposed to be on tour, with exotic animals, making 800 dollars a week. The tour doesn't start for two weeks? What? I wanted to leave, but didn't. I'm not a smart man.

I followed Lonny to a shed where we collected 2 wheelbarrows and 2 shovels. We then headed out into the park proper. Along the way we met up with our third man, Ignacio. Ignacio had a shovel and a wheelbarrow as well, but his wheelbarrow was full of clear bags of gore. Just unidentifiable meat and blood. Lonny explained that we would go to each tiger cage, lure the tigers into a smaller holding cage, shovel their shit, dump the bags of gore (tiger food!), and then let them back into their main area.

Have you ever smelled tiger shit? Tiger shit smells fucking awful. It's like... acidic almost. It burns the nostrils. We scooped tiger shit, and then each collected a bag o' gore. I was struggling to untie mine when Lonny smacked me in the back of the head with his open palm. "Knife". Ah, yeah, fuck, that was what the knife was for. I was taught to hold the bag high, and use the curved knife to slit the bag open and let the contents dump on the ground. Tigers don't care if their food is on the ground. After 12 hours of this, I retired to my car. I'll admit it now: I cried. I was 18 years old, 100 miles from home, and I wasn't on a glamorous tour bus. I was sunburned already, and I

considered going home again (spoiler: I considered going home many times but it only stuck once, way on down the line).

I settled into my backseat, focusing on the golden sunset colors throughout my car, when the screaming started...

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.4 Interview with Rani Baker game designer, music genius, queen of nightmares

Saturday, Apr 04, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

This article is part of the Awful Talk series.

Rani Baker is one of the internet's foremost satanic cryptid noise music producing game dev comic anti-artist. She's been featured in places like Cracked, Bunny Ears, and the nightmares of Jerry Falwell, Jr. Milo Yiannapolis once sent her $200 for feet pics.Today, she sits down with us to talk about SA's influence on her work.

So, what's your relationship to Something Awful?

This article, on stupid ways to annoy Everquest players. Reading it now, it all feels so low-stakes compared to the kind of hilarity people gin up in Eve Online, but there was a while where Lowtax and the Goons were the forefront of digital assholery. They were the first to realize how much potential for stupidity the internet represented.

I remember all the irrational exuberance of that first big dot-com bubble, Something Awful were the only ones willing to point out how nude that emperor was, even if they had to strip him themselves. That kind of brash confidence seemed so powerful, I wanted that power for myself. Growing up in a religious compound in rural Texas, it took a lot of work to find any media or entertainment which really spoke to me as a person, and I had to hide much of that from my family, so to find a whole site filled with my kind of feral disrespect was a slice of a whole new kind of heaven.

I joined the forums shortly afterwards, and fell in love with the early text and screenshot style Let's Plays, back when image-heavy threads still required 56K warnings. Compared to video, it took a lot of effort from authors to make that kind of text based medium engaging. Instead of just straight transcriptions, people would summarise, spoof, even invent new plots whole cloth. They'd get the readers in on it too, soliciting suggestions for where to go next or what to name characters.

I remember in particular enjoying the now problematic Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom one, as well as the Clash at Demonhead one where a goon figured out the game takes place in Wyoming.

I really enjoyed the level of detail folks put in examining background details and Easter Eggs even (especially) for nothing more than an obscure inside joke, shared by 8 people in a thread with maybe 30 regular readers. It feels odd to say this about reading other people playing videogames, but it felt like an intimate experience, something you could tailor for exactly the 12 people who cared.

The rest of the forums were a whole other flavor of crazy. SA remains a fascinating mix of experts sharing the intricacies of their fields breaking bread with dudes named Butt The Shitman Fart, whose primary contribution to every conversation is a slow-motion derail about how the subject at hand inflicts upon him pernicious bowel complaints. When two forum-famous loudmouths would throw down in a thread, it was like watching parliamentarians brawl over quorum votes.

But you never posted anything, yourself?

The forums were wild back then. People would get banned over nothing. I hear it's less brutal now that y'all are in your 40s (Ed: This was written prior to the recent failed forums coup) but I was honestly unwilling to gamble my $10 when I was having fun just reading along.

What got you into programming your own games?

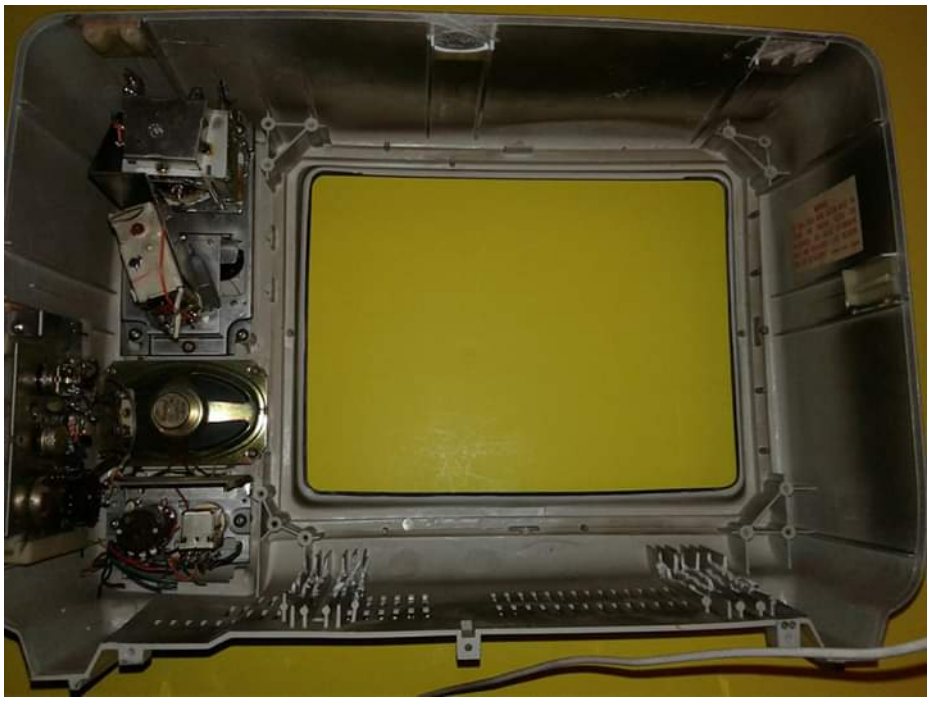
I did it as a hobby since I was a teenager, but never really released anything outside of the occasional 90s era graphics mod. Basically it was a combination in late 2014/early 2015 of hype for Twine, the rise in popularity of gamedev social media like Gamejolt and Itch.io (as well as the thriving game jam culture there) and living with a gamedev. It's really impressive what you can accomplish when you're trying to impress the stranger who fills your couch with farts. Twine as a game engine is amazing for developing proof of concept releases quickly, so creating a release over a short game jam deadline was great for stimulating my creativity.

Well, creativity and panic. Programming games is like trying to get mortar to adhere to thin air, it's a chair without legs which only breaks after the player stands up. A game is a complete experience in the same way artists are complete people, they hold up to a cursory glance, but the minute you change the frame of reference you realize it's all bandages over a shambling mess. I was born for this shit.

So, a lot of the music you make comes from instruments you've circuit bent and hacked to bits. You also displayed one of your games on an old school TV you customized, could you tell us a little about what inspired that?

Actually the television part was for an art show I was presenting it at. It was hosted by Tabitha Nicolai, who made a name for herself combining virtual/gaming environments with physical installations. Getting to work alongside such brilliant artists remains a personal high point. There were also projects by Seanna Musgrave, a collab between Porpentine and Rook, and other folks whose work borders gaming and art.

So we went for that idea, attempting to set up what would look like a mid-80s gaming rig. We found an old wood-grain dresser and a vintage hooded lamp and big chunky headphones. Originally I was planning on showing the game off using a Commodore 64 color monitor but that fell through. Then I found that gorgeous 1975 Zenith Blackstripe and knew that was what I needed. Took a week to hollow it out and stuff an 8 inch flat-screen monitor (which just barely fit) into it while preserving the mechanics that allowed the channel dials to turn and click. The results looked as close to the corner of an 80s bedroom as could be hoped, minus the dirty laundry and Sisters of Mercy posters.



The knobs clicked? That's an incredible dedication to detail. How can you fit a sense of payoff into a game programmed in a weekend?

It's like writing a short story or a poem instead of a novel. Margaret Atwood's [you fit into me] isn't less good than Infinite Jest because it's shorter, it's vastly superior because it's not a bloated meandering mess. If a work feels complete, regardless of size, the audience will be satisfied.

You just gotta keep track of the narrative you are trying to communicate, keep the scope containable, and provide a satisfactory conclusion that still leaves a little mystery. Same way you handle an affair with a French pastry chef.

I chew through a ton of visual novels in my spare time, many of which are beatable in an afternoon

and take notes on what works and doesn't. Like, for example, seducable French pastry chefs. Big fan, hoping it takes off as a motif.

Game design is no different than how I handle stuff like music. Can I make a two minute song that communicates the same amount of information as a five minute song? Sure, it just depends on how the information is relayed.

Not what it's about, but how it's about it?

Sure. Different approach. You don't get to linger on much in short-form, but that's part of the beauty.

Like you listen to a band like The Locust, who have perfected the 30 second song, and you realize it's such a barrage of information that those 30 seconds seem massive somehow. It's all about locking the audience in and bombarding them with information that may not even completely make sense to them until after the narrative is complete and they get a breather to think about it.

The immediate experience might be short, but it continues on in your thoughts afterwards. In memory, themes and motifs emerge from data which just seemed like chaos as you experienced it.

Vertical not horizontal, like it's layered

So my gaming environments tend to be visually and sonically aggressive. I can bring them into a place of confusion and discomfort which is to me a second skin. Faked historical ghost photos, hints of secret societies, Lovecraftian monsters, throbbing music... for 23 Rooms in particular I imported a lot of recordings of early 20th century exorcisms and seances.

I even added mechanics where the game world shifts perspective on you, for instance walking from the car to the house which can either be immediate or require a long walk randomly. Just keep the audience mystified and questioning everything until they reach the end where it is all explained.

People are drawn to mystery, you just gotta make sure it pays off or they feel cheated.

My last question is, do you have any advice to the aspiring game designers who will read this?

Start small. Like Atari 2600 or early NES, small scope arcade style projects. Release a bunch of those with your name on them before you try to tackle your one big dream project, which could spiral out into unwieldiness if you aren't already in the habit of giving yourself a schedule. Participate in the game jam community. Network. (Shoutout to @PIGSquad!)

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

4.5 The Tiger King and I: Part 3 - Of Kangaroos and Men

Monday, Apr 06, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Read the previous part here.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

The screaming was coming from near where I was parked on the back gravel lot and for a moment, I considered ignoring it. I was sore. I was so sore. Curiosity got the better of me and I exited my car and followed the screaming. It was deepening dusk now and I saw a group of workers all circled around something. I pushed my way through to see what the commotion was. Ignacio was fighting a kangaroo. Please let that settle in. Let that settle into the part of your brain where the absurd lives, as it did mine. I was watching a man trying to contain a loose kangaroo. I did not, and still do not know anything about kangaroos but one thing: They will beat the ever-living shit out of you.

This was not Frazier v. Ali, this was Tyson v. unarmed 4 year old. Ignacio was trying desperately to wrap his arms around the kangaroo while it kicked and punched and thrashed. I tried to step in. A rough-looking older woman pulled me back and said simply, "no". We all stood there, in the twilight, and watched Ignacio take his beating. He was bleeding. He was bleeding a lot. He had slumped down to the ground and the kangaroo had kicked him maybe 5000 times at this point.

A shot rang out and the kangaroo dropped, twitching to the ground. Robert stepped through the crowd and holstered his gun. A group of gruff men pulled Ignacio's unconscious form into one of the trailers. Robert pointed out 4 people at random and then sent the rest back to our lodgings. The men he picked, I assume, were to help him move the massive dead kangaroo.

I never saw Ignacio again. I tell myself that he was healing up. We left on tour 13 days later and I still hadn't seen him. No ambulance came, no police. I was initially confused by this. I later realized what was going on: Joe Exotic used almost exclusively illegal aliens and young, naïve teens like me for staff. It was easier for him that way. Ignacio, I hope you're alive. If not, I'm so fucking sorry.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.6 I Lost My Faith In President Mountain

Monday, Apr 06, 2020 by Everett "Rad Milk" Byram (@rad_milk)

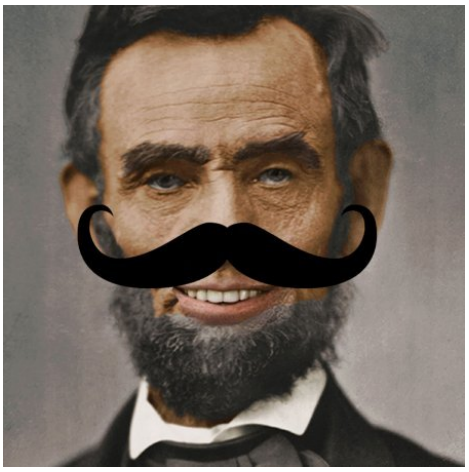
Recently while looking at and smelling a one dollar bill, I lost my faith, deciding that I no longer believe in George Washington. Or any of the Rushmore gang really. I think historians just made them up so people would stop asking about the damn mountain, and be able to control the masses while also inspiring hope.

I believe the identity of Washington was created by the federal government to beef up the fabricated story they had weaved about America defeating England to gain our freedom. Not true. The Brits were never even here to fight. They were back in their castles eating biscuits and gravy without a care in the world. Why else would we talk in normal English, and they, in such a pompous and ridiculous manner? The only part of the revolutionary war I actually choose to believe is Mel Gibson in that one scene in The Patriot (2000) when he's running around like a psycho waving the American flag. Now that's a true American. George Washington? Not so much.

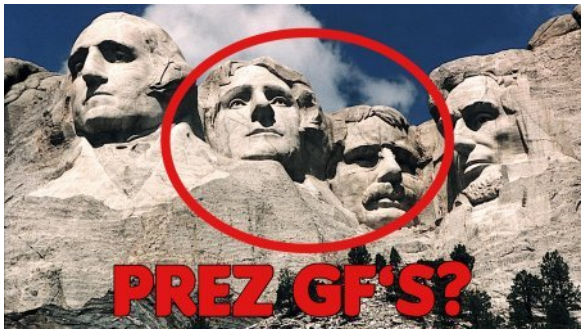
This is the kind of happy face I like to see on a mountain.

The second alleged "President" I would like to renounce is Abraham Lincoln. First of all, no president would ever name himself after a pseudo-luxury car. Secondly, what happened to his mustache? Beards don't just grow all stupidly like that. Show us the mustache, Abe! Beard only? No one has that. Get Real.

Natural, non-doctored photo of "Abraham Lincoln." He looks like dog shit.



Honestly, I have no idea who the two ladies are in between the two false figureheads, but many philosophers and mythologists alike speculate that the pair of women are Washington and Lincoln's respective girlfriends. A leading theory on this matter insists that the woman to Lincoln's left is his jilted lover, who had stolen his precious mustache.



All in all, I fucking hate President Mountain with all my heart, butt, and ass. I loathe the false countenances of those granite men and women of all genders, whose sneering faces that comprise the contemptuous monolith, mock me from above. I almost wish the gods would have never allowed the formation to be forged through the natural process of erosion over millions of years.

-~Everett "Rad Milk" Byram (@rad_milk)

4.7 The Tiger King and I: Part 4 - Chainsaws and Colostomy Bags

Tuesday, Apr 07, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

Where do bags of gore come from? This was a question I didn't care to ask or know the answer to. I was 1 week 3 days into my time at the park when I was told we had a "delivery". At this point, I was no longer sleeping in my car; Joe had graciously offered me an air mattress in his living room, as I had proved myself to not be a PETA sleeper agent by working at his shitty park for more than a week.

I swung by Kyle's sleeping quarters to say good morning. He was furiously replying to emails. More meat for the G.W. Exotic Animal Park grinder. That was his whole job. He didn't work on the grounds with the animals. He didn't shovel shit, or cut open the gore bags. He sent emails to people like me, promising an awesome adventure. I don't know how many people got fooled into working for Joe Exotic, but if you're out there, it wasn't just you. There has to be a lot of us.

I staggered outside to see our delivery. It was an 18 foot trailer hauling 3 dead cows. I was, as always, confused. Lonny and our newest dumb teen Brandon approached with 2 wheelbarrows full of plastic bags, bread ties, and a chainsaw. I realized with dawning horror what the cattle were for. No one wants to know how the burger is made. No one wants to know where the gore bags come from. I am not a butcher. I don't know the different cuts of beef, but when you're cutting meat for a tiger, the cuts down matter so long as they're small enough to fit in the bag.

I spent two 12 hour days cutting up 3 dead cows with a chainsaw and a hatchet. Doling out gore into bags held by Lonny and Brandon. Halfway through the second day, I shut off the chainsaw after a long cut, wiped my hand across my forehead, and turned to see that Brandon was gone. He couldn't do it. I don't know how I did it. I started to ask Lonny where he went when I heard a gunshot.

We headed towards the sound and there stood Robert, panting and holding his side with his left hand. In his right was his revolver. Brandon's small blue kia was thumping out of the back lot on a flat tire at roughly the speed of sound. Robert turned and looked at us. "He worked for PETA. I knew it when he got in the car to leave. He probably recorded y'all. It's gonna be on the internet.". Robert had shot out his tire to keep him from leaving. I should have left as well, but seeing the paranoia on full display from Robert was terrifying. He shot his fucking tire out. Was he aiming for the tire? I'll never know.

Joe came running from the main house to check out the commotion for himself. He and Robert settled in next to each other, whispering about "PETA" and "the police". I don't think they were talking about the band. The smell of cattle blood was clearing out of my nose and I suddenly smelled shit. Bad shit. Joe realized it at roughly the same time and jumped back from Robert. I did not know until that point that Robert had a colostomy bag. During his run to intercept Brandon, he had punctured it on a fence. He was now leaking liquid shit down the front of himself. I shook my head and returned to the chainsaw.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

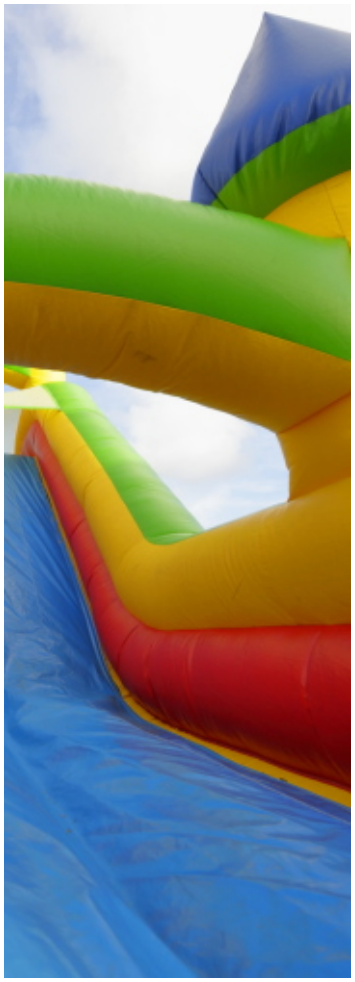
4.8 Another Day At The Bounce House Business Complex

Wednesday, Apr 08, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Hi, welcome to... oh you're looking for Brain Surgeon For Fleas?

Well, this is the wrong bounce house. You need to go that way, just past the Warhammer Miniatures Painting Workshop.

Next!



Life Or Death Jenga? Sorry, you've got the wrong place.

The bounce house you need is a ten minute walk in that direction. You'll know you've gone too far when you see the Spinning Plates Masterclass.

Next!

No, this isn't the Exceptionally Fragile Egg Warehouse.

Head that way past fourteen bounce houses. The one you're looking for is right across from Chet's Tightly-Timed Eyesight Chart Tests.

Next!

Oversized Monks Making 1/6th Scale Copies Of The Bible? Sorry, no.

You need to head that way for three miles, just past the Vinyl Record Listening Depot.

Next!

Live Bomb Defusal? Sorry, wrong place.

You're looking for the bounce house just across the way, between National Seismology Headquarters and the Live Re-Restoration Of Elias Garcia Martinez's Ecce Homo.

Next!

The Bounce Houses Aren't Real Information Center Where All Our Information Is Stored And Displayed On Etch-A-Sketches? Nope, different bounce house.

You need to head that way until you see the Porcelain Plates That Say "The Bounce House You're Looking For Is To The Left" bounce house. When you get there, take a right.

Next!

No, this isn't the Bartender Training School Where They Specifically Learn How To Fill A Glass All The Way To The Very Top Without Spilling A Drop bounce house.

What you want to do is take a left at Thirty Thousand Needles Hanging Pointy End Down From The Ceiling Held In Place By Little More Than Friction These Things Are Seriously About To Fall Dude. Then go straight for about five hours until you see the Eyelash Removal Center bounce house

and take a right.

Next!

Why yes, this is the Why Are All Buildings Bounce Houses Now And Hey Where Did All The Construction Materials Go Museum! Before you enter we ask that you please remove your steel, cement, and wood shoes.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

4.9 The Tiger King and I: Part 5 - The Tour Begins

Wednesday, Apr 08, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

I woke up on the day the tour began feeling pretty good. I hurt everywhere, and was crispy sunburned, but now was time for the adventure! The grand voyage! We were gonna see the country! Yay! Joe stepped into the living room while I lit a cigarette and settled onto the couch. He turned, saw me, raised his fist, and ran towards me. I slid down off the couch as he went tumbling over it. He popped back up like a fucking whack-a-mole and screamed, "YOU'RE GONNA BURN THE HOUSE DOWN!" He snatched the cigarette from between my fingers and took it outside where he stomped on it for approximately 3 minutes. He stomped on it far longer than was necessary or even sane. He came back in and put his hand on my shoulder.

"I run a safe house and a safe tour." he said. At that exact moment, a lion cub wandered out of Joe's room. He hurriedly shoved it back in and shut the door. He returned to me and gave me a stern, "no smoking". He told me that I needed to get packed because the bus would be leaving in an hour. Our first stop was to be in Cuba, Missouri and we had to get on the road. I gathered my things and headed to the bus. Once there I met with the people I would be on tour with for the next six months. There was Jack, who had been on 4 tours with Joe. He was a veteran, around 23 years old. Viv, an 18 year old and the only woman on tour with us. Easy Money, the semi-truck driver, who would be moving the equipment and animals via 18-wheeler throughout the tour. Pam, the 50 year old chain-smoking head of Security and bus driver, and then the assorted clowns.

The clowns were hype men. They would wander around wherever we had set up during the tour, and pull people in for a magic show or to pet the tigers. They consisted mostly of older felons who couldn't find work elsewhere. They were unrepentant alcoholics, the whole lot of them. Joe hated alcohol. The whole reason he started the animal park was in memory of his brother who had died because of a drunk driver. Joe kept alcohol test kits on hand at all times and would piss test employees if he thought they had been drinking.

We boarded the bus and hit the road. At this point, I had not been paid a dime.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.10 The Tiger King and I: Part 6 - Cuba and Other Places Than These

Thursday, Apr 09, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

I slept. I slept gloriously. No 12-18 hour days. No tiger shit. No gore bags. No chainsaws. I slept on the floor of the tour bus between the two front beds. The tour bus was laid out thusly: Entryway, driver's seat, a bed on either side, a large common area-ish place, and then in the back, the master suite. Jackson took a bed and Viv took a bed, I took the floor between the beds, and fuck whatever Mike Lindell tells you in MyPillow commercials; the best sleep of your life comes in the form of a tour bus floor after 2 weeks of non-stop manual labor.

I awoke somewhere in Arkansas, face mashed into the side of one of the beds. I reached for my glasses and couldn't find them. I immediately freaked out. I needed those. We weren't even in the fucking state anymore. I stumbled back to the master suite and slammed on the door. Joe opened the door, tiger print bathrobe open, exposing his exotic cock to the world. I ignored his pecker and asked if he or the dude he brought on tour with him had moved them. Oh yeah, Joe brought his boyfriend/husband on tour. I don't remember his name, but he had a matching dumb bleached blonde mullet and constantly whined about everything, especially his PS2 games. He was always misplacing them.

Joe stared at me with that glassy I-obviously-do-blow look and shut the door. I heard rummaging, banging, slamming, and finally he emerged with my glasses. I told him to keep his hands off my shit. He told me TimTim had just been playing around. TimTim was not his boyfriend I would later find out. I collected my glasses and went back to my space on the floor. We arrived in Cuba that night. We pulled into the parking lot of a Motel 6. It was nice and cool outside. Joe declared that he would be procuring hotel rooms, and deboarded the bus and whisked into the motel.

He came back shortly after and handed Jackson 2 room keys. With the swipe of a card, Jackson dutifully led us through the side entrance of the motel and up the stairs to our room. 12 guys in one room. Viv in her own. Joe Exotic was a piece of shit, but not enough of a piece of shit to let a lone 18 year old woman stay in a room with 12 dudes; half of them ex-cons and the other half randos. It's probably the one good thing he did in his life. Double bed room. 12 adult men. I made my way for a bed to claim it and was bodyblocked by one of the clown name Joseph. He almost didn't need to wear the red clown nose, he had so many burst capillaries in his nose from constantly drinking.

He shoved me hard and I went down, not expecting that amount of violence of action from a man more than twice my age. I stood back up, and, being the bigger man, did not shove him back. He took the bed and I slept on the floor of the bathroom. There was a hierarchy and apparently I was at the bottom. At some point in the night someone stepped over me and took a piss. I would come to get used to these strange moments of pure shamelessness. You don't stay in hotel rooms with 11 other fellers and not get used to seeing a cock or two. After a short night in Cuba we headed eastward towards some town that time, and I, have forgotten the name of. This was my first experience with "set-up". I had gotten comfortable, I thought manual labor was over. I was so fucking wrong that I should hit myself right now this moment for thinking that. Set-up involved arriving at whatever parking lot or mall Joe was going to be doing magic in, and setting up the temporary cages, lighting rigs, and magic props for the shows. Set up took about 10 hours, we'd do it overnight, get an hour or 2 of sleep, and then run the ticket taking and tiger photo shoots.

Tiger photo shoots were a hoot. Suburban families would pay Viv, sitting at a folding table, 50 dollars, and I would open the temp cage, put their small child in there with a 6 month old tiger (look it up, they're fucking big at that age) and take a picture. We'd do this all day, stopping once an hour for Joe to put on his magic show. Joe would start the show with the same spiel about his brother dying via drunk driver, while speakers blasted the Forrest Gump theme. He'd then perform amateur magic with assistants who had never trained with him to do magic tricks.

Much laughter was had by the people watching this spectacle as false bottoms opened unexpectedly revealing blushing magic assistants, fake handcuffs would break before their cue, you could see the seam of the straitjacket where it could be quick-released. It was a shit show. After the malls or parking lots would close down we'd go back to our hotel room, to our designated spots, and sleep for a couple of hours. It went on like this for many cities over the next few months. More work, less sleep, and the ever looming threat of TimTim.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.11 The Tiger King and I: Part 7 - Tempers Flare and TimTim shows himself

Friday, Apr 10, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

I'll dispel the mystery right now and tell you about TimTim the Fucking Thief. I thought TimTim was a pet name for Joe's boyfriend on tour. I don't even remember his name, but it wasn't TimTim. I finally met TimTim after a night in St. Louis where we had set up in a pet store parking lot. We returned to the hotel and this many months into the tour, no one was speaking to anyone else. Everything was a slight. No one was sleeping enough, no one was eating enough, we still had not been paid. "The money is coming" says Joe Exotic. "The money is coming". Why did we believe him?

He paid for food and lodging, always a meager meal and a single hotel room for every male employee. He treated us like the animals at the park. One particularly bad night, I was sitting on the floor of the hotel room, reading a book, when Joe opened the door and threw a plastic bag full of Taco Bell bean burritos in, and then slammed the door shut. The bag of burritos hit me in the head. I was fucking livid. I stomped out of the room as the other guys rushed to grab as much food as they could. I stomped down to the tour bus and let myself in.

I stomped (lot of stomping) to the master suite and slung the door open. I lost all my anger immediately. Joe was in bed, his boyfriend next to them, and in between them, was TimTim. TimTim was a monkey. A chimp I guess? I don't know monkeys very well. They were watching TV. Joe hopped up from the bed and pushed back backwards, shutting the door behind him. I told him he was treating us like fucking animals to which he replied, "you are all fucking animals, go back to your room". Defeated, and still processing the TimTim revelation I returned to the room.

I wanted a bed. I wanted a bed so goddamn bad it hurt. Physically and mentally. My back hurt from sleeping on the floor all the time. My head hurt from sleeping on the floor. Let me preface this by saying I am not proud of what happened at this point. I take no pride in my behavior during this difficult time. I had just seen two men watching TV with a monkey and things in my life seemed kind of grim. Joseph had gone to get free coffee in the hotel lobby. I pushed all of his things on the floor and took the bed. He had been king shit of bed mountain the whole tour. Threatening and at times fighting with the other guys to get the bed.

When he came back to the room he was pissed. We met in the middle of the room and when he opened his mouth I hit him. I hit him so hard I broke 2 of my fingers and wore a splint until the end of my time with the tour. It made a sound like the contents of a gore bag hitting the ground and Joseph's legs gave up and he folded like laundry. I went back to the bed and ate a bean burrito while another guy put him in the recovery position. I remember he snored. I later learned that when someone is knocked unconscious and snores its not like snoring while sleeping, its like snoring because your soul was separated from your body momentarily by a very angry 18 year old who hadn't slept more than 6 hours in 4 days.

Joseph told on me. He marched down to Joe and told him that I hit him. Joe came up to the room and pulled me into the hallway. He told me I would be left in this town with no way home. He said he'd take my cell phone. I could have killed him. I wanted to. I was young, sleep-deprived, and high on the adrenaline of just stone cold knocking out an adult man. I apologized and returned to

the room. It was November now, and it was cold in Michigan.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com every day for another installment of this first-hand look into an extremely deranged world. 2 parts remaining!

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.12 We Must Vote For Floor Zombie

Friday, Apr 10, 2020 by Raccoon City Democratic Party (@slicknicklives)

As you are all well aware, Raccoon City's current Governor, the hulking 500 pound flesh beast known as Nemesis, has been burning this city's economy to the ground. Literally. With that oversized flamethrower he carries around. As such, in this upcoming election, it's of the utmost importance we fully support our chosen candidate to ensure we bring Nemesis' fiery reign to an end. And that candidate is Floor Zombie.

Unlike his radical opponent Gov. Nemesis, who stalks his prey relentlessly; Floor Zombie's bloodthirst is reigned in by his distinct lack of mobility, caused by an absence of working legs which were shot off while he was pursuing his last victim. Additionally, while Gov. Nemesis can equip any manner of military weaponry, extend sharp tentacles from his forearm, and crush human skulls in his fist, Floor Zombie has only his restricted reach and a partial mouthful of rotten teeth to utilize.

Floor Zombie's unique ankle-biting platform is thus perfectly suited to the many frightened citizens of Raccoon City! With his violent lunges being much easier to bypass with a simple side step or a quick knifing to the back, Floor Zombie offers a relatively safer life for most. We're confident that the voting populace will resonate with these progressive values, but only with your help can we push Gov. Nemesis out of office and out of our safe bunkers once and for all!

We know that a lot of you younger folks were hoping to nominate local police officer and living person Jill Valentine for this election, but the extreme radical nature of Valentine's positions to "end the zombie plague" and "shoot the zombies so we don't have zombies" are far too extreme for the Democratic party's sensibilities. This kind of pie-in-the-sky thinking might sound appealing on the surface, but is ultimately unrealistic. I mean, who's going to pay for all this zombie killing? We insist you turn your enthusiasm for Valentine's campaign into a newfound

enthusiasm for Floor Zombie, who shares similar but more realistic positions, such as "fewer zombie bites" and "only the weak will perish."

It's not a time we can afford to be divided, here. We all know we just want a return to a time before Gov. Nemesis took office. A simpler time where our blood-splattered streets were only populated by screaming civilians and shambling cannibalistic corpses, and maybe the occasional mutant crocodile. A time where, so long as you had your neck-guard and your cardio, you could live to see another day in your shelter. Gov. Nemesis and his ever-changing arsenal has taken our lives and wrecked them beyond recognition. Floor Zombie is here to bring Raccoon City back to the status quo we all crave.

Lastly, last election's voter turnout was abysmal, which is one of the reasons we find ourselves in this situation in the first place. It's all hands on deck here, so we don't want to hear any excuses this time! No more "Oh I don't know how I feel about voting for a throat-lunging mindless husk" or "That thing killed my grandmother and it can burn in hell before it gets my vote." This is a political revolution we're trying to start here! There's no room for dissenters or second-guessers! Floor Zombie, regardless of how many of your family members' intestines he may have eaten open-buffet style, is our best chance at winning this election, so be sure to show up this time!

Floor Zombie is the kind of candidate *everyone* can get behind. To help you spread the word as we approach election day, we're providing these sharable campaign images! We're all counting on you to help us achieve victory! Remember Floor Zombie's slogan, **"Stability Through Inability."**

-~Raccoon City Democratic Party (@slicknicklives)

4.13 It is I Who Planted, Within the Mind of Elon Musk, the Imbecilic Idea to Shoot a Car Into Space pt.3

Sunday, Apr 12, 2020 by Townsend Reed (@distastefulman)

This article is part of the My Absolution of Elon Musk series.

"There's no fucking laws in space, fellas. No progress-stifling regulations among the stars!" I broke my hands from their mutual embrace and gestured to the ceiling. "Job creators like you shouldn't be beholden to such trifling things." The clinician caught himself mid-eye roll and managed to mutate the movement into a false yawn. Musk was once again lost in thought. Ideas were all but visibly churning through his sausage grinder of a brain. He slipped each idea into a little intestinal pouch — bite-sized and palatable to any potential investor. Yum. Shareholders love seeing this shit. Excellent optics. I'm adept at this sort of performance but Elon is the real deal, loathsome as he is. Musk's eyes darted to mine. "I have a rocket company that could probably shoot shit into space without much of an issue. I need to check with the VP over there but I'm pretty sure we can shoot shit into space, no problem." I nodded and said words like "Genius!" and "Visionary!" with what I think was a decent amount of enthusiasm. Musk didn't care — he was frantically texting someone on his phone. The clinician looked baffled. "You two — titans of tech that you are — truly believe that it will be easier to perform bleeding-edge genetic modifications in orbit around earth than here in existing facilities actually on earth?" Of course I didn't think that. I didn't think about it at all. I was simply seeing what would stick with Musk. I would ride it out from there.

Musk seemed to be finishing up his flurry of texts. "It appears we can't just shoot shit into space yet. Well we can but it's apparently pretty complicated and we'd have trouble justifying that to shareholders. My PR guy says it wouldn't look great if I shot a lab into space to make my dick young. Even if I promise to make other rich guy's dicks young it probably wouldn't sit well with the general public, whose dicks would remain old." He looked dejected but not outright defeated. If I were to continue down this fascinating rabbit hole I had to strike now. "What if you shot a car into space?" I blurted out. My tongue and lips formed the words before I could even form a thought. This is one of the many things I absolutely adore about myself. My subconscious fills in these gaps so that I may concentrate on sating my appetites. I can, at times, ride the train, so to say, by shoveling coal instead of driving. The clinician was becoming visibly distressed. Perhaps he was coming to realize these sorts of conversations happen in boardrooms and opulent corporate campuses the world over and that fifty-something year old frat boys and thirty-something year old code-addled man-children actually came to consensus on actions that affected hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people. I was likely projecting, though — he was probably astounded more narrowly by our present display of stupidity. "Well, I think I'll leave you two magnates to it then. I'm sure you have much to discuss and I have another meeting to prep for." He smirked. Musk and I braced for a name drop. "Mr. Zuckerberg will be here for a consultation regarding his-" The lady at the front desk made a jarring noise somewhere between a hiss and a shriek. She glared wide-eyed at the clinician. "Ah yes," he said, "I'm not legally allowed to say his name aloud and certainly not permitted to tell you the nature of his consultation. If — I mean when — we genetically modify you I will have to remove that memory and replace it with some branding placement that elicits pleasant emotional responses when you see our logo and preferred copy writing font." He slipped quickly back into the hidden doorway and the entrance vanished along with him.

"Why the fuck would I shoot a car into space?" Musk asked me, without an ounce of disdain. It was working — a genuine request for elaboration. I had to pull something together quick. "Well you have all those electric cars. Right? That's your thing. People love them. Why not just shoot one of those mother fuckers into space and have the world watch as you do it? They'll love it!" He was

lost in thought, now gazing into the buxom Anime woman on the back of his cell phone cover. After a short pause, he blurted out: "I don't follow." To be completely honest here, I didn't even follow. I was winging it. Exhilarating! The narrative of my life, to me, is the string of these moments — checkpoints, where I am completely fucking off, rolling the dice, taking bets with myself against my own charisma and mental agility. I was going to get Elon to launch a car into space. I swear to God. "Listen bud, shoot an electric sports car into space and they will come. You'll have the public eating out of your hand. You could rocket an elephant into the fucking sun after that. Pull some Thomas Edison shit. No one would care, they'd be too busy throwing money at you and retweeting your entry level internet culture posts." I was really outdoing myself today. First time meeting Elon Musk and I had this guy's balls firmly in my mouth — in a powerful way. To clarify: I'm the powerful one in this scenario by having his balls in my mouth. I could bite them off. He furrowed his brow "Entry level? Haven't you heard of irony?" I hadn't. "Hear me out," I said. "You're paving the way here. You're doing something wild. You're playing into the outrageous new celebrity type stunting. Generating buzz. You're an icon. You're a brand. You're a Kardashian. Kind of. Something along those lines. It's not enough to just say a bunch of stupid shit online — you have to **do** dumb shit in real life — and get the twenty-four-hour news networks to cover it incessantly for at least two days." He was fully engaged — brain whirring. "Cut the crap. How does this make my dick young?" I threw back my head and smiled. "Won't these ultra-hip genetic engineering firms want a slice of your media hype pie? You're like the Cheesecake Factory of hype, Elon. Making hype cheesecakes with a huge line outside filled with people wanting to overpay for those hype cakes." Elon shook his head. I continued. "Alright, I'm losing you here. Bad analogy. What I'm trying to say is you can justify putting some of the genetic firm's tech on your rocket by offering them some publicity in the piranha swarm media blitz of shooting your electric car into space. Think: Cross Brand Synergy." I finished with the subtle convincing hand gesture I use after giving the PowerPoint presentation on business ethics I do not agree with but am legally required to give. Musk looked like he had released a fart that surprised even him. "I can do that. You're right. People would love to watch me send a Tesla into orbit. I could be using this money for anything but I'm using it for this. This sort of technology always trickles down to the masses. Like Tang and space blankets. Dippin Dots." He was right. I could see the idea cementing in his consciousness, taking root in his mind, prepping for actualization through his will. And the legions of workers he commanded. Quite a few overachieving millennials would be working nights to accomplish this nonsense. We exchanged twitter handles and I added him on Whatsapp before we left. He asked me to get coffee, but I was afraid he would press me on my idea more and perhaps change his mind. It would be better to leave him be to work it out. I was only eighty percent sure he would follow through with it.

There it is: my shame laid bare. I wanted to see how far I could push the fellow. The act of manipulating anyone — no matter how absurd — regardless of self service, tangible gain, or personal interest, is utterly irresistible to me. I had to watch a grown man of substantial means follow through with an idea I conceived in the same way a child recants a fantastical lie, and I have no one to blame but myself. Though I doubt any substantial benefits will actually come of this poorly devised stunt, I will absolutely welcome any advances it may provide to my goal of redesigning my body to wear the Halo armor that lays waiting in the panic room under my Alameda estate. I wish to apologize for subjecting the public to a media bonanza of Silicon Valley foolishness that likely won't even benefit me anyway.

Elon — I hope you can make your body young again too. I hope we can both get what we want and deserve: immortality, or at least the facade of it. Perhaps we can meet again and combine our incredible minds and impressive means to achieve this goal. Or maybe, as has recently entered my mind through a particularly vivid dream, make one of the Thundercats in real life. The woman one. We can discuss this more on Whatsapp.

-∼Townsend Reed (@distastefulman)

4.14 The Tiger King and I: Part 8 - Clowns on The Death March, Tour is Over

Monday, Apr 13, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

My time with Joe Exotic ended in early December of 2009 in Davidson, Illinois. We were doing shows at the Davidson mall. I had started the tour at 6'6" 310 lbs.; by this point in the tour I was 250 and feeling like I was dying every moment of the day. I was turning 19 later in the month and was thinking that I was going to be celebrating my birthday with this group of fuckers. I know they thought I was a fucker as well, because I had sure become one on tour. I went from naïve youth to angry carny in just under 6 months.

I sat in a lawn chair on the balcony/walkway of the little no-tell motel in Davidson and watched the snow move in. We had just gotten back from the mall and I was enjoying that nicotine for the first time that day, away from Joe's prying eyes. He had become increasingly manic throughout the tour, accusing us all of being spies, withholding pay, flying off into rages. At one point we all realized TimTim wasn't on tour anymore. I don't ever want to know what happened with that situation.

From my perch I see the clowns. Joseph, my arch enemy at this point, among them. After the incident in Michigan he had ramped up his aggression towards me. We had become animals and the hotel room was a place to be dominated. I started carrying the curved knife Lonny had pushed into my hands so many months ago. Eventually one of us would be dead if this continued.

The clowns are walking into the ever-heavying snow, towards a bottle shop I'm sure. As Joe had become more reclusive, the rules had become more lax. I could smoke again, the clowns could drink. It took the edge off a bit, but not much. I watched the clowns go, still in their outfits, still in their greasepaint, walking towards the nearest amber liquid to dull that ever-present edge.

An hour later I'm back on the balcony, cigarette in hand, when I see the clowns coming back. The snow is blizzard-level at this point and they are walking single file. "The clown death march", I thought to myself. Each one is holding a brown paper bag to their chest. Their greasepaint is sloughing off their faces, it is the stuff of nightmares. A casual observer, unaware of context, would think they had died and gone to the worst of hells. The lowest level, where it's always frozen, and the clown's faces are sliding off.

The next day Joe is manic. He announces we're going out for a big dinner and he has a big announcement. We were supposed to be leaving for Kentucky that day but he said we were sheltering in Davidson until the storm blew through. That night we all get on the bus and go to only the finest dining establishment: Cracker Barrel. Ever been to a Cracker Barrel? Don't. It's just kitschy wood paneling and shitty macaroni and cheese. Joe tells us to go wild, order whatever we want. We're halfway through our meals when he stands up.

"Attention. I have an announcement! The tour is out of money. You have all been stealing from me! I will continue paying for lodging and food, but that's it!" He then sat back down and we all let it sink in. I stood up and walked out into a blizzard. Since we thought we were leaving for Kentucky, my duffel was in the storage compartment of the bus. I collected it and started walking. I walked for 4 or 5 hours. I had about 200 dollars cash on me, and my debit card. Almost all the money I made had been wired back to Oklahoma and put in my bank account, because I was genuinely afraid another employee might rob me. I eventually came across a Holiday Inn. I stepped inside and

tried to get a room. The very nice lady behind the desk let me know I had to be 21 to get a room at the Holiday Inn.

I thanked her and asked where the bathroom was. A few hours later I woke up to the Davidson, Illinois police roughly pulling me up from the floor. Apparently sleeping in the handicap stall of a public restroom is vagrancy or something. I showed them ID and gave them the short version of this story. They very nicely explained that the nearest Greyhound station was in Markham, Illinois about 20 miles away. They called me a cab and sent me on my way.

I arrived in Markham sometime after midnight. I spied a place called the Hi-Way Hotel (good street view that shit, it's still there I think). They offered hourly, nightly, weekly, and monthly rates. I paid 40 dollars for 2 nights and went to my room. They did not ask for ID, and they took cash. I was away from Joe Exotic, but I was also hundreds of miles away from home. I stepped into my hotel room and immediately noticed the door didn't lock. I wedged the small desk included with the room against the door, and finally got some fucking sleep.

Check back to SomethingAwful.com tomorrow for the final part of The Tiger King and I.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.15 Jim Carrey's Nightmare Journal

Monday, Apr 13, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

February 5th -
I'm mentoring a class, when my forehead starts dripping. Greenish pus oozes out my pores, while the students mock and jeer. One kid comes up from behind me and thrusts a paintbrush in my eye. "Just four more hours, Mr. Carrey." My skin feels like glue, with sticky tendrils stretching as I try to seperate my naked form from the chair. I wake up unable to move, and lay there for an hour before falling back asleep.

February 11th -
I'm at home making dinner, only the dinner is a rotting pound of meat, falling apart as it fries on the skillet. The smell makes me gag, but I stand there and start to peel off chunks of it to eat. My stomach turns as I slide the grey shit down my throat, but I just can't stop.

March 9th - Inside the President's Office, I show Trump my mocking paintings of him. He laughs, his face growing larger. Before I can retort, I start sinking into the rug, shrink-wrapping me in a quilted cocoon. I can't breathe. "Make the face!" A muffled voice cries. I try to contort my facial muscles under the strain. Christ's face appears before me, smiling.

March 23rd - The smell of latex permeates the air in my wine cellar. Rows upon rows of rubbery faces stare back at me. As I reach out to touch one, it snaps its jaws shut, and I feel my teeth start to grind. "Take five!" I hear from above. I'm now one of the heads on the shelves. I rub my teeth together and instinctively shout "THAT'S A SPICY MEATBALL!"

April 2nd -
I'm inside the big fuzzy dog van, only now I'm driving with a blue ball on a stick in the passenger seat. Look at the blue ball, make eye contact with the blue ball. I look into its blank, sharpied-on eyes,

and a voice coming from an earpiece says "What's shakin'?" I crash the van into a tree, and a large branch extends into my chest cavity. My lungs fill with blood and I start coughing and gagging, waking me up as I gasp for air.

April 12th -
Inside my childhood home, I'm making cookies with mom. I'm talking about a movie I saw the other day and make a face to demonstrate a character to her. She frowns, and wags a finger. "Someday your face will get stuck that way." I feel my face muscles with my fingers, and realize she's right. I can't move a single muscle. My face is frozen in a Jack Nicholson-like expression. I start to cry, and the oven starts burning. "Now look what you've done!" Mom becomes infuriated, and opens the oven up, letting the smoke roll over me. I'm consumed by it, and find myself wrapped in total darkness. "AND THAT'S THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES." Mom shouts through the void, becoming more distant. I lay in the void for what feels like hours, sobbing.

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

4.16 The Tiger King and I: The Final Part - The Amish Are Not Cool and I'm Coming Home

Tuesday, Apr 14, 2020 by Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

This article is part of the The Tiger King and I series.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed mostly because I forgot them and partially because they might sue me for putting them on blast.

I woke up in the Hi-Way Hotel to the sound of someone banging on the door. To this day I pat myself on the back for bracing the door with that desk. The person was yelling for someone that wasn't me. They kept yelling that they needed their shit. I stayed very quiet and just listened until they left. Figuring I was safe, I decided to watch TV. The only channels that came in clear were porn, and it wasn't that kind of day, so I moved the TV to see if the coax cable was loose. I found the mystery person's shit! Two small baggies filled with a white substance and two scorched glass straws. I pushed the TV back into place and decided I didn't need to watch TV.

When daylight approached I talked to the guy behind the bulletproof glass at the front desk and got directions to the Greyhound station. I snagged my duffel (hotel door didn't fucking lock) walked there, and purchased a ticket to Oklahoma City. The bus would depart in 3 days. Just had to survive until then. I stocked up on convenience store food and drink on my way back. When I returned to the Hi-Way the man had come from behind the bulletproof glass and met me outside. He took my hotel key and gave me a different room. Apparently someone came back and got their shit from behind the TV.

The three days were uneventful. I slept a lot, talked to my mom on the phone, assured her that I was gonna be ok. She had been doing research online about Joe Exotic, and based on what people were saying then, I had walked into a literal and metaphorical tiger pit. She was happy I was coming home and so was I. I settled into my shitty hotel room, and counted down the days until my Greyhound came.

I boarded the Greyhound in Markham and our first layover was in St. Louis. I read a lot on the bus. A very pretty girl sat next to me and I tried to chat with her. She had a bonnet and a long dress, a bit old fashioned, but I was 18 and didn't care about anything. She blushed and smiled, but didn't talk, so I made bad jokes and goofed off. I felt like I was getting somewhere. We stopped in St. Louis and everyone got off the bus for the layover. As I was standing up to disembark, I felt a hard grip on my shoulder. I turned around and was met with two amish guys about my age.

One of them asked if I was talking to their sister. I said I was, and that she didn't say anything back to me, and I was just generally complaining about lack of communication when he said, "don't talk to our sister." in a very Amish voice. Imagine a stern Amish voice. Yep. You got it. It's that one, the one you're thinking of. I was full of piss, vinegar, gas station food, and terrible cigarettes (Davidoffs, if you're wondering. Awful smokes) and I sized up the two Amish fellers. I decided my best course of action was to shut the fuck up and not talk to their sister. These guys looked like they could drag me off the bus, build a barn, kick my ass in it, and not break a sweat. They had the physique and temperament of guys who work a farm all day and never masturbate.

All said and told, the bus ride plus layovers took just a hair under 24 hours. I stepped off a bus in Oklahoma City and felt at home for the first time in months. I was done with Joe Exotic, done with his crazy tour, done with the other employees, done with the G.W. Exotic Animal Park&

Except my car was still there.

-∼Jans "Untrustable" Holstrom (@HolstromJans)

4.17 The Best Puns are Accidental

Tuesday, Apr 14, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

Awoo.

For those of you privileged not to know me, I am. Many wish I was not, but fie on them, I will continue to be until I can't. You're welcome, and hello.

Normally I like nothing more than to get on up into your eyeballs and holler about the rapid decay of all things, but given how self-evident that whole has become I thought I'd share something nice instead: My greatest accidental pun.

I love puns. They are a crucial part of active listening, making puns about what your conversational partner is saying is the best way to show you're paying attention without making it about you. It interjects levity into formal affairs, clears the skin, lifts difficult stains off of counter-tops, and invigorates the enthinkulation lobe of the meatbrain.

People who don't like puns simply don't like the art of conversation. They are crankity, antisocial brutes who plow through human interaction like a runaway dumptruck full of horse assholes, treating conversation as a direct path between their mouths and whatever they want. There is no romance in these people, no joy in the unexpected, just a ceaseless throbbing demand that you sterilize your outputs for maximum convenience. These are the same ones who, when presented with cake, would choose to sneer and knock the plate from your hands, rather than enjoy a shared treat.

I did not always feel this way. It seems impossible, but I too was once an uptight cake-slapping dork with stupid ideas who considered puns beneath me. I was living with an artist in one of those white collar cities whose urban center was little more than a fight club of glass boxes utterly devoid of life. The only weekend attraction was watching tumbleweeds roll past restaurants we couldn't afford.

We shared a single room in the dusty basement of an abandoned medical museum, it was cozy. There was no running water and we stole electricity from a streetlight. At night the Artist would recite Beowulf in the nude while I would cut the penises out of medical textbooks and hide them in specimen jars. Before streaming media, that was just what you did to have fun.

We were walking to a greasy spoon diner the morning after a particularly raucous all-night game of Baron Munchausen, when I spied a flock of geese alighting in the swampy overflow of a retaining pond. I was dressed like a vaudeville dandy (for Secret Reasons), when I gestured to the birds with the tip of my BUDK Viking Power Tactical Sword-Cane.

"You know, I ate Canadian goose once," I lied "whilst serving in the French Foreign Legion." That part was honest, as a teenager I had a summer job with the Legion waxing all their mustaches.

"Did you now?" My partner mused, gazing at the birds. "And, pray tell, what did they taste like?" They traced a piece of crimson silk idly through their fingers.

Having never actually sampled goose, I settled on the first two random adjectives that sprang to mind, "game-y and fowl."

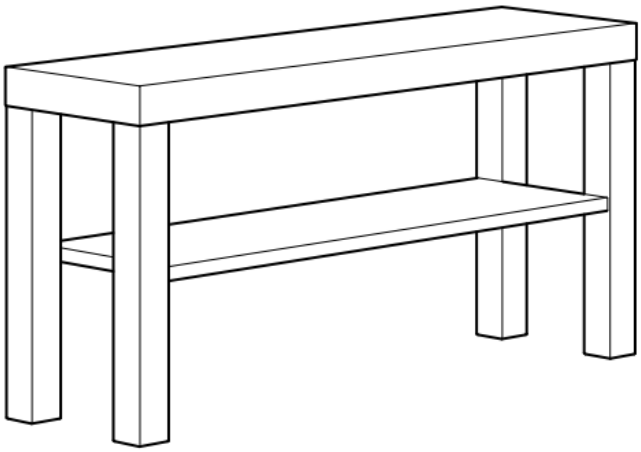
In response, my beloved muse turned to face me, squared up, and *pushed me into the lake.*

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

4.18 Filling In An IKEA Manual's Missing Words

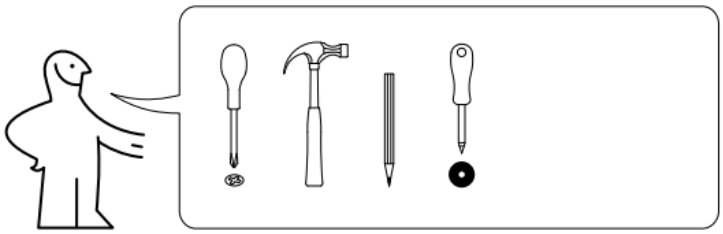
Wednesday, Apr 15, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

LACK

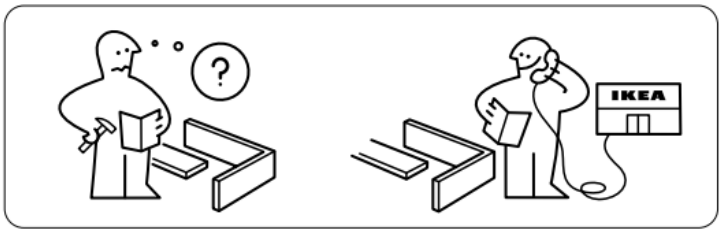


10" x 36" BED UNIT

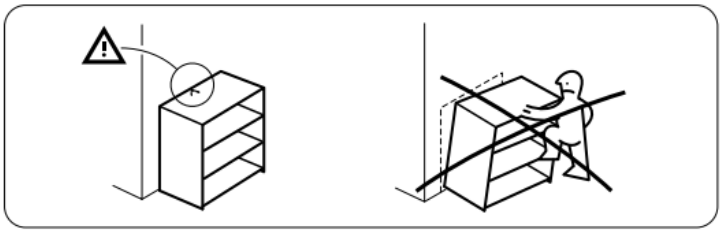
IKEA®
Design and Quality
IKEA of Sweden



TALK SHIT ABOUT YOUR TOOLS, TRAILING OFF BEFORE MENTIONING THE LARGEST AND DEADLIEST ONE

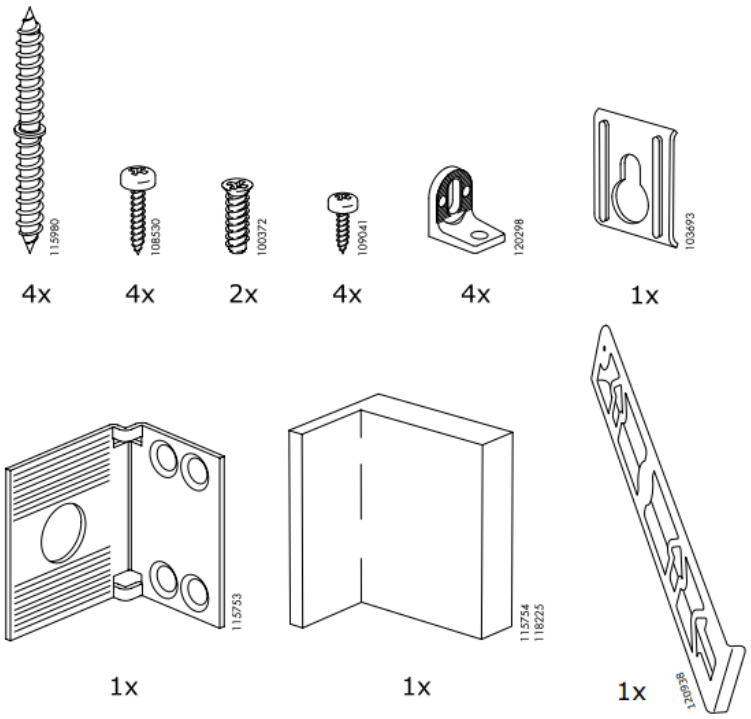


USE THE INCLUDED IKEA PHONE (AND STRING) TO CALL US AND DESCRIBE THE LOOK ON YOUR IDIOT TWIN'S CONFUSED FACE



THE UNIT'S BUTTCRACK MAY SHOW AS IT GROWS TALLER AND SPROUTS TWO ADDITIONAL SHELVES

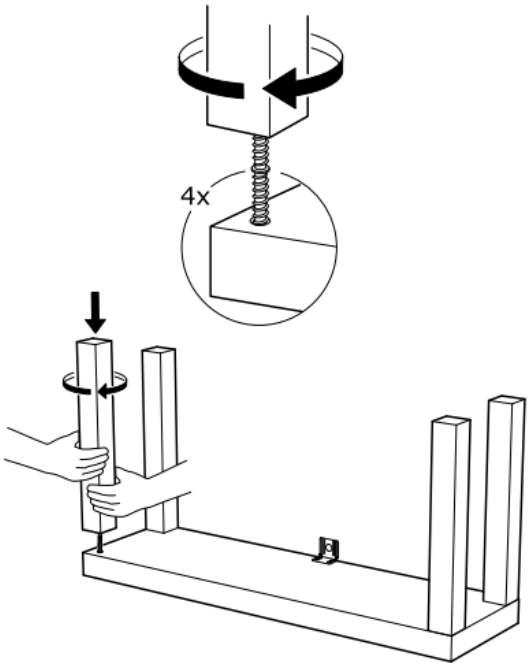
NEVER REVEAL THE DOTTED LINE BEHIND YOUR LACK
THIS IS A GHOST
BEST TO LEAVE IT ALONE



IF YOU LOCATE THE ABOVE ITEMS IMMEDIATELY CONTACT THE AUTHORITIES

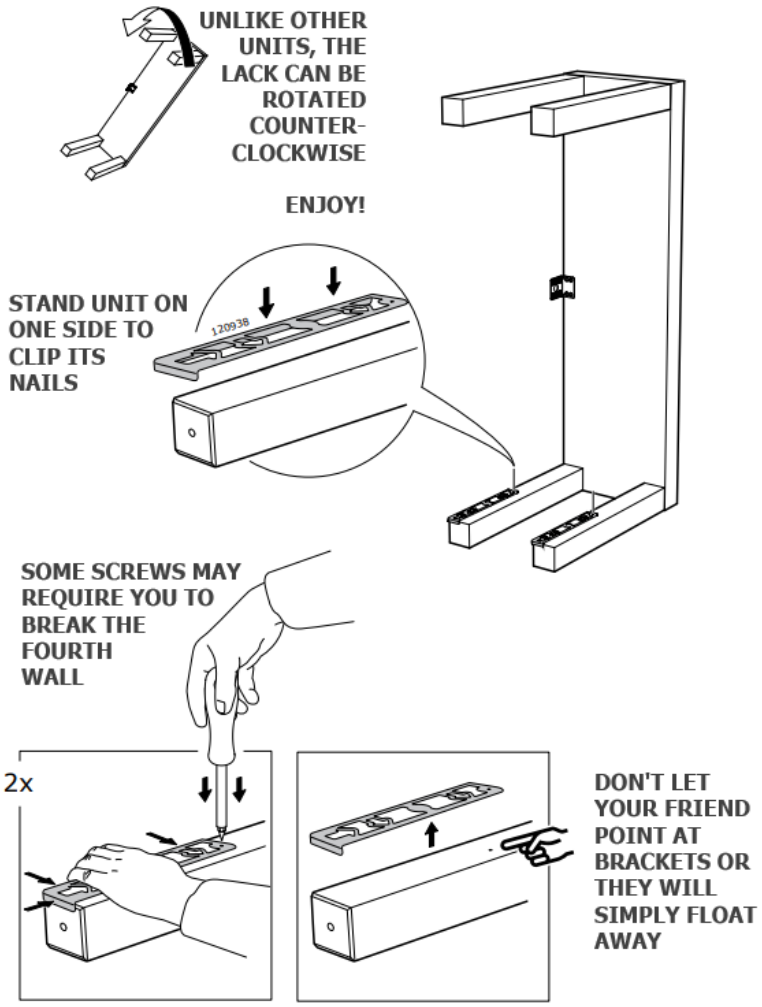
DO NOT ATTEMPT TO APPREHEND THEM

THESE ARE HARDENED MATERIALS DEVOID OF CONSCIENCE



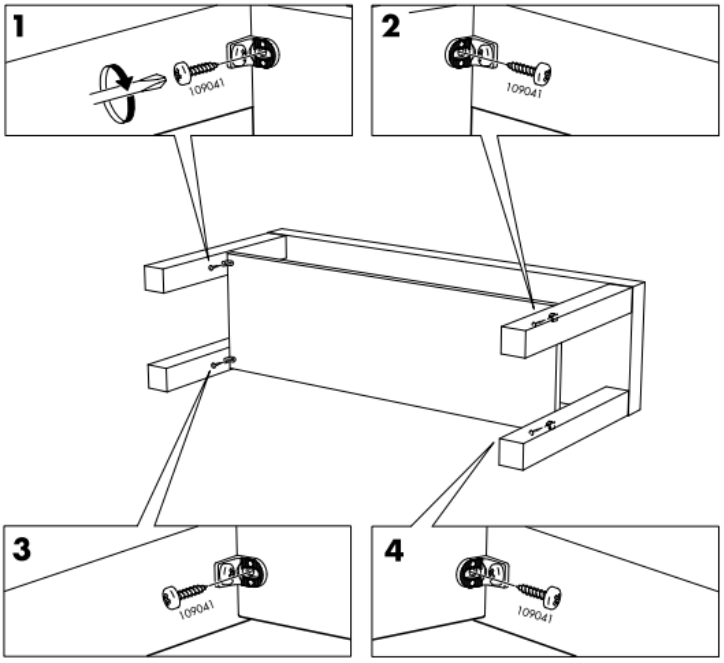
SCREW IN THE THREE NORMAL LEGS

THEN SCREW IN THE FINAL LEG, THE ONE WITH THE FLOPPING DISEMBODIED HANDS ATTACHED TO IT

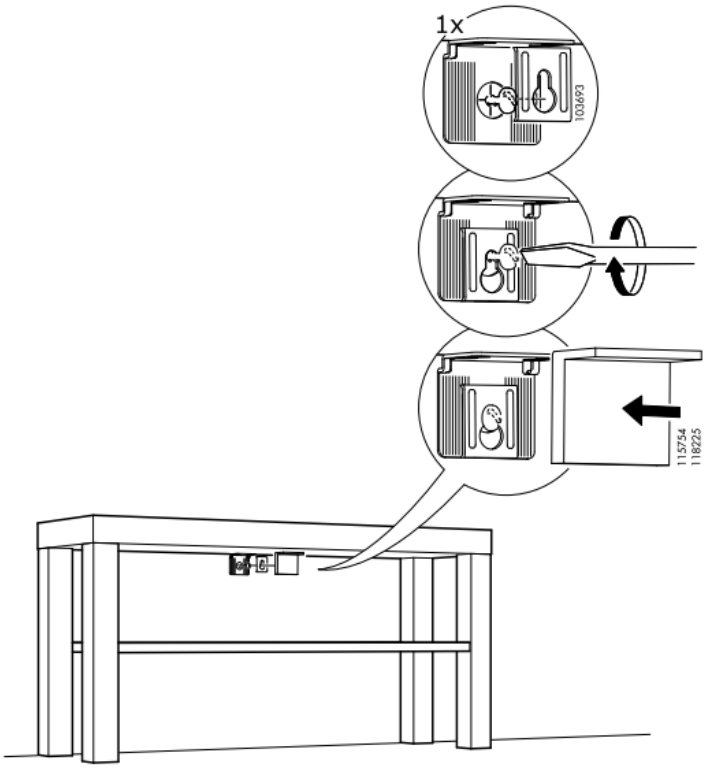

UNLIKE OTHER UNITS, THE LACK CAN BE ROTATED COUNTER-CLOCKWISE
ENJOY!
STAND UNIT ON ONE SIDE TO CLIP ITS NAILS
120938
SOME SCREWS MAY REQUIRE YOU TO BREAK THE FOURTH WALL
2x
DON'T LET YOUR FRIEND POINT AT BRACKETS OR THEY WILL SIMPLY FLOAT AWAY

SCREW THE FOUR BRACKETS INTO THE FOUR LEGS

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF SCREWING A FIFTH BRACKET INTO A FIFTH LEG SOMETHING HAS GONE TERRIBLY WRONG



SHOULD YOU ENCOUNTER A SIXTH LEG CASUALLY WHISTLE AND WALK AWAY, THEN FLEE IN A ZIG-ZAG PATTERN UNTIL YOU BREAK LINE OF SIGHT TO YOUR HOME



ONCE ASSEMBLED, YOUR LACK UNIT WILL NOT SHUT UP ABOUT MOUNTING BRACKETS AND SCREWS

JUST NOD AND INDULGE IT AS THE UNIT SETTLES IN

IN TIME LACK WILL TALK ABOUT MOUNTING BRACKETS AND SCREWS THREE TIMES AS MUCH, IN RUN-ON SENTENCES

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

4.19 The Five Flavors of Grief - They're not Just Delicious with Death, Anymore!

Thursday, Apr 16, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

The Five Stages of Grief (also known as the Kübler-Ross model because I think I'm supposed to give credit to the authors of a theory I'm using because it gives their lives validation or something) details a sequence of emotions commonly worked through as one adjusts to the news that a loved one has died. The names of those stages, in order, are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

Over my life, I've come to realize that people tend to go through these stages not just as part of the mourning process, but as an initial reaction to most negatively charged big emotional developments. This is extremely useful in many situations where I have to remain calm while dealing with someone who is not. For example, I'm on the PTA board at my kids' school, a position which often finds me dealing with dramatic parents who are exasperated over some development that has nothing to do with me and that I do not care about. Like the parent who messaged us, "why on EARTH is my kid coming home hungry with most of their lunch uneaten? Who in there is NOT doing their job?!" Naturally, my first inclination is to respond, "you. You are not doing your job as a parent making sure your kid knows the value of finishing their lunch." But that won't do anything but escalate the situation, and I don't have time to litigate lunch eating (I am way too busy reading quarantine news and taking shots.)

But remembering the five stages of grief helps make the issue less personal. It's way easier to deal with a ranting mad-parent by realizing that they are just dealing with the anger stage of emotional shock. This allows me to be patient and help them achieve some level of satisfaction.

Now, more than ever, this tool is helping me deal with people who are going through some deep shit.

It was recently announced that the school would be closed until Fall. This kind of shocking news can cause parents to reach out with questions that are trivial and kind of dumb-assed. But I can't really do what I normally do (make fun of these questions in this column), because I know that they're just working through their own shock at once-in-a-lifetime news. So, when someone asks me "are there still plans to go through with Bingo Night?" and I say, "no, because people will die," and they reply with, "are there plans to do a virtual Bingo Night on zoom or whatever?" I want to say, "sure are! Just let me open this file here labeled, 'emergency backup Bingo Night plans in case of apocalypse,'" but instead I gently remind myself they are going through the "Denial" stage of bitter emotional trauma.

Which is important, because I can't indulge these people to get rid of them, either. I can't say, "maybe, I'll look into it, bye!" I need to tell them that all our resources are currently being used to make sure parents know what essential services we are maintaining, such as free student breakfasts and lunches, and to get the virtual wheels turning for us to enact the policies we need to to hit the ground running next year, such as making me PTA president because I know how to seize power when there is no means for anyone to run against me.

It's also important because dealing with the Denial stage in a matter-of-fact way often leads the parents right into the next stage of grief which, unfortunately for me, is Anger. And, again, that lets me compartmentalize the interaction into one where I'm not feeling attacked, so I can do a good job of providing the parental version of "customer service."

Still, as easy as it is to realize that the stages of grief are happening to someone else, I still tend to

miss it when I am going through them, myself.

I have been nursing a wet cough for a few weeks. I wasn't too worried about it, because I was checking my temperature regularly and was doing just fine. Just fine, that is, until a few days ago, when my scanning thermometer read a fever of 100.5 degrees. This prompted me to immediately take action: I went into our utilities closet and got a change of batteries, because the thermometer was obviously broken. Because I was in Denial.

When it continued to tell me I had a fever, and that the fever was getting worse, I berated my wife for going out that week for such frivolous items as food, medicine, and emergency supplies (whiskey). Because I was in Anger.

Then came the third stage: Bargaining. "I'll go to the hospital when it tops 101," I told my family. Then, "when it tops 102." When my fever hit 103.5, I entered the fourth stage, Depression. I could be seriously jacked up, here, I might spend the next few nights in a hospital.

Luckily, I knew I could only wallow for a few minutes, because I had to stiffen up and hit Acceptance before my body started taking serious damage. I went to the emergency room.

The emergency room is always a downer, but these days it's especially depressing. You can't be there with your loved ones. Luckily I came at a slow time, because I was quickly given a room and intubated with fluids. Still, I grew inconsolably sad once I was hit with one of the most common triggers for depression: Realizing my phone was running low on power.

Then a notion struck me: If going through the five stages of grief got someone through death, then, logically, going through them in reverse order should get someone done with the process of healing. Right? Sure, it made perfect sense to a brain that was rocking a 103 fever.

I had already knocked out the stages of acceptance and depression, all I had to do was go through bargaining, anger, and denial, and I'd be on my way home! I quickly looked for an opportunity to bargain for something.

That came soon enough, as they needed to take a LOT of blood samples from me. I had a weird combination of symptoms, so they were checking for everything. They sent in two nurses to take six vials of blood from my veins. These nurses were perfectly nice and professional, but one was just in training to draw blood. I've got easy veins to drain: They've gotten nice and thick from years of me curling my fists into tight balls and shaking them at the sky.

I was a bit off-put when the nurse in charge said, "now you need to avoid the wrist when trying to find a vein," and the training nurse immediately started trying to find a vein in my wrist. Fun fact: Slipping a needle under the skin and wriggling it around is not an effective way to get it into a vein. Funner fact: It is a good way to nick a vein, causing blood to gush from my arm.

So I negotiated: I said the nurse-in-training could have two spots to go nuts: Treat me like a test dummy, stab me until my arm looks like a lawn sprinkler, learn everything you need to know all at once. But, those other four blood draws had to be done by the experienced nurse.

Still, my spirits remained high: I had gotten through the third phase. All I had to do was hit Anger, then Denial, and by my logic it would be time to go home. It just took another half hour of x-rays and more waiting before that opportunity leapt into my veins: Three of my blood samples had come back tainted with bacteria, so the two nurses needed to poke me three more times.

After they did that, I stopped being angry, laid back, and closed my eyes. I was convinced all I needed was to have my Denial moment, and they would send me home. My temperature had fallen to under 100 and I was feeling much better. Even the super-weird Covid swabbing didn't bother me much at all, I knew I was just one denial away from finally leaving the hospital after having things

One week later, can you spot the two places the nurse-in-training took blood from?

stuck into and withdrawn from me for hours.

After 45 minutes, my doctor came in. He said my blood tests and x-rays had all come back normal, so I must have had some sort of chest infection that antibiotics could take care of. I was ecstatic, being in a hospital is always super-uncomfortable and I just wanted to go home and help my wife with the kids. I asked when a nurse would come in and take all the tubes out of my body. He replied that my heart rate and oxygen levels were still off, and I needed to be observed for at least several more hours. I said I felt fine, and asked what would happen if I just went home. He replied that I would have to sign a form stating I wouldn't sue him if I died.

There it was! My opportunity for Denial! By denying that I was going to die, I was allowed out of the hospital. Reverse Stages of Grief Theory works, people, use it anytime you want to get out of being somewhere.

Hell, the entire world seems to be using it to get out of quarantine.

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

4.20 To Mrs. Villagrande, on the Information Superhighway

Saturday, Apr 18, 2020 by Ian "BFM" Helm

Dear Mrs. Villagrande

I don't expect you to read this, I mean, it's not even addressed to your real name. And I don't believe for a second that you would actually read the front page of Somethingawful.com, an armchair critics' trade journal more jaded than a Mayan temple. But, I have been wrong before.

I can only imagine the mess I looked like and was in the mid 2010's, a lumpy bag of resentment in reglued shoes dumped outside the county workforce office like so much sadsack. I was a rumpled gross hoodie with a human somewhere in it, potato-postured, with chips on both shoulders, like a booger wiped on the plastic chairs. Miserable on a good day but when forced into a downtown office complex *in the sunlight even*? Tasked with telling a new caseworker, a total stranger, my "work situation"? I was not a happy lump of thirty, but my family needed to qualify for SNAP benefits more than I needed my pride. It was honestly the best price I'd been offered for it up to that point.

I didn't think you'd believe me. Keeping my own hours, making my own opportunities. Working from home. Online. Feast or famine business model but I think, yeah, it is one, I guess. You know. A real job.

A *real* job. The thing one is told to get, the most capitalist of brickbats. A real job is one a person drives to and from at the same time every day, this was established with religious weight in America long before I was born. It is a job that earns one the resentful obedience of people in lesser jobs, or a stock portfolio one can and probably should leave on autopilot. Maybe both, if it's a really *real* job. One might even get to see a doctor if they're sick or injured, though really, that's dreaming. It's still just America.

Right away I was wrong. Real jobs vs unreal ones never came into it. "Self-employed" was all I needed, then you told me to chart my hours, which you admitted could be difficult for a home business. I could use my discretion, and make up the remainder volunteering. Plus, free bus tickets! Considering how fraught the war for my quarters had become between the regional bus company and Soapy Sarah's laundromat at the time, that was big.

Dazzling a resentful young dunce like me with such weapons-grade kindness is impressive. Even once, I mean, really, free bus tickets. But then to do it over and over, meeting after meeting like you did; eventually you were just showing off, admit it. If volunteering one place didn't work, we found another, if business was bad that month you always understood, and before I knew it you were no longer Mrs. Villagrande. You were Belinda. And you really were there just to help.

Piece by piece your niceness dismantled my armor, until one month I could finally say it. I. Was. An. Artist? And a writer, I guess, I mean, kinda, qualification 4, qualification 5, etc. There was more to what I did than "Design" or whatever curt nondescription I used on my obsessively kept little orange charts. And I worked. On. The. Internet? If that's okay?

It was a real job, was my outlandishly shy point. It just didn't look like it to anybody but me.

Wrong again. You said you had been a labor services caseworker for 40 years. Starting in the 1970's you had attended, annually, seminars brimming with demonstrations of what experts believed would be the future of employment, technologies that let people work from home. Video phones, remote control everything, and of course The Information Superhighway. It would be up to your generation of civil servants to adjust both your clients and yourselves to driving our new information supercars to work, or however that metaphor was supposed to go together.

You said you had wondered countless times how long it would take for that transformation to happen, and what exactly it would look like. Every year you saw advancements towards it, often before the general public did. You saw cellular phone coverage stretch planetwide, the internet go from an odd hobby to a component of breathable air, satellite video teleconferencing become mundane; each supposedly the turning point in turn, according to the Future of Labor demonstrations and their ever-hopeful demonstrators.

However, innovation after innovation, the stigma persisted that it wasn't *real* business if one did it remotely. Working from home was just inherently illegitimate, exactly how friends or romantic partners one met online were once seen as having some kind of disqualifying stink on them. But polite civilization, for lack of a better term, was coming around on those aspects of the internet by that point. Why not work?

You had a theory. You theorized that most people couldn't imagine their job looking different than those they grew up seeing, and that this trapped them. Simply having no frame of reference limited their concept of work, exactly like how calling the internet a "superhighway" was limiting. People just didn't know any better model for it at the time. Some day some invention or trend would finally tip over the teetering telecommuter epoch, it was inevitable, but in the meanwhile nothing but preconceptions held it back.

If I had known you and I agreed about this completely- in fact that you had formulated my opinions *several decades before I had*- things would have gone differently from the start, Belinda. I certainly would have spent more time talking with you about working online, about the tools and platforms and communities I had found there. Maybe I would have even told you about SomethingAwful.com where you could eventually read this letter. No, still probably not, but the point was moot. It was too late, you were recommending me to a new caseworker, ready to retire to charity work for your international church organization.

Which you called your real job. The one and only time you ever said it.

You apologized at our very first meeting for the paperwork being insufficient to properly log self-employment hours, Mrs. Villagrande. Why hadn't I listened? Why hadn't I realized I had someone in my corner who would love to talk about all the amazing new ways of working, in fact who had been already talking to people about it for most of her adult life? Because I couldn't imagine you being any different than what I was used to, and got trapped by my preconceptions, for lack of reference. Bullseye.

Now that the 2010's have slipped away, with their pop-up stores and little local libraries and Olympic games all relics of the pre-pandemic era, a lot has changed. I no longer live in the city, and I no longer need SNAP (If you do, sign up. Everyone deserves to eat). I do still work from home, but I'm hardly an oddball anymore. If the work-from-home future you had prepared for was on the precipice but just waiting through 40 nudgeless years, Mrs. Villagrande, then 2020 has been ten nudges, a shove and a shotgun blast. With Domino's Pizza telling me to "ask about our contactless delivery" between nightly news segments shot in anchors' home booknooks, I can't help but wonder what society's concept of jobs will look like next. Will little children seeing their parents at kitchen table telemeetings grow up with a more flexible concept of what it means to work? Will that open up more opportunities for them to choose between? To be more open to discussing those choices, and less ashamed about them? I hope so.

I wonder what impoverished country you're doing your real job in today, Mrs. Villagrande. Who else are you helping? How much further along the information superhighway can you see now?

Do you suffer from depression? Many of us do! Join the SA Forums today and visit one of our mental health threads; they're no replacement for formal care, but our community can recommend resources and help you feel less alone. We can't wait to meet you!

-~Ian "BFM" Helm

4.21 Disney Announces VALIANT Remake

Monday, Apr 20, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

Walt Disney Studios are on a roll lately, surprising Disney fans left and right with blockbuster remakes of their most beloved properties, and the train doesn't stop here!

In a recent press release, Disney announced an all-new live action take on their classic war pigeon film, **Valiant**, to be released as an exclusive **Disney**+ original.

"We're delighted to bring our feathered friends back, with an all new star-studded cast that we're confident will do justice to the original." The release reads, followed by a few of the new confirmed cast members, including Paul Rudd as the titular Valiant, and Jada Pinkett Smith as Nurse Victoria.

Not all fans are happy with the announcement, however:

DatieKatie @datiekatiee
Like I'm not racist but Nurse Victoria is clearly a WHITE pigeon,
plus this is set during WW2 which was before black ppl existed??
39
822
3.7K

DISNEY FREAK Cody @dfreakcody
disney needs to stop w/ this SOCIAL JUSTCE and Give us the VICTORA we deserve!!!!
39 822 3.7K

CARtoonz @cartoonz
What a JOKE! @Disney you are about to destroy a cinematic masterpiece and I won't stand by idly. I'm starting a PETITION!
change.org/stopvaliantrem...
FORCE DISNEY TO STOP THE VALIANT REMAKE
Section 1 - Disney must agree to immediately halt production on the u...
change.org
39 822 3.7K

Celeste @real_celeste
After that Lion King fiasco I thought I was done with this studio tainting their classics. Remaking Valiant though? That's a new low.
39 822 3.7K

DisneyYumYums @disneyyumyumofficial
I think a remake could be amazing! I always wondered what Valiant and his goofball army buddies would look like in real life! With that said, I do think @Disney needs to make sure they are FAITHFUL to the source!
Go team Disney, you can do it!
39 822 3.7K

RolloStan @rollostanofficial
If you mess up my boy Rollo too we're gonna have problems @Disney
39
822
3.7K

Zack Slappster @triggeredgaming
I've finally compiled my take on the #NotMyVictoria controversy. First off, let's go over the HISTORICAL FACTS of the 1944 US military. (1/14)
39
822
3.7K

SalliSweet @ssweet7
I love Jada but THIS AIN'T IT. #NotMyNurseVictoria
39
822
3.7K

NurseVickieVickie @nursevickievickie
As an exclusive Nurse Victoria cosplayer I'm upset. Furious, even.
I EMBODY VICTORIA EVERYDAY IN MIND AND SOUL AND CAN
TELL YOU THAT SHE IS NOTHING LIKE JADA. #NotMyVictoria
39
822
3.7K

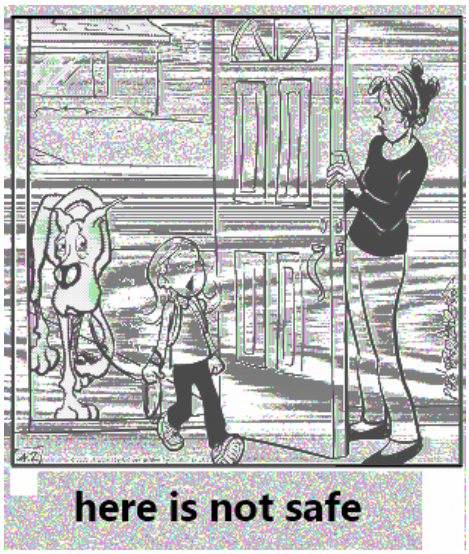
NRA Bethanie @bethcolt42
WTF Valiant was my favorite movie growing up but Jada? Rly?
No thx.
39 822 3.7K
Gully Gally @gullygally
VALIANT was a masterpiece of animation as-is. I don't understand why they won't just leave well enough alone?
39 822 3.7K
DisNebriated @disnebriated
If they fuck VALIANT up I'm unsubcribing, and might even consider throwing away my season pass and cruise line tickets. Dr. Strange 2 looks pretty cool tho!
39 822 3.7K
PissyGamer @pissygamer
Disney Cucks Make Nurse Victoria Look Less Fuckable To Us Nazis | pissygamer.net/cantfuckapige...
39 822 3.7K

I for one, am ready to fly into the amazing world of Disney's VALIANT once more. Make peace, not war! But what do *you* think? Do you think the **Valiant** remake will be as great as the original, or will this be another Disney flub? Let us know *your* opinion by **signing up for a forums account!!** Leave a comment or whatever!!

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

4.22 We Are Powerless To Stop The Nightmare That Is Marmaduke

Tuesday, Apr 21, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)



what did you do? WHAT did you DO?

This is the first harbinger of the hells to come: Fur, on your favorite chair. Your slippers now resemble a half-pound of freshly used Big League Chew, scraped off the underside of an Illegal Party Toilet. Your child screams in their bedroom, horrified to discover their homework reduced to damp confetti. Your bacon lies in an uncooked pile on the kitchen floor, defiled.

On their own, there is nothing unusual about these trivialities. They befall any home lucky enough to have a family living inside. But, when taken as part of a constellation of similar ills befalling your neighborhood, they begin to outline the shape of a terrible evil.

Was it an army of gophers who dug up Phyllis's tulips last week? What phantasmal teeth tore off the rear bumper of Postman Joe's mail truck? Who bit the tips off of every garden gnome hat, in every garden in Orange County? The weatherman refuses to mention the curious rain of hair reported around your neighborhood. Has he turned his back on you, knowing what comes next?

Your family prays to idols for deliverance, but you take precautions. Circles of salt under your children's bed. Wormwood left unburnt in the fireplace, inscribed with bone-runes. A bowl of warm gravy left on the back porch. Lamb's blood on the door. The old ways have as many wards against it as names for this thing bearing down upon you; Fangmaster, the Marchand of Darkness, Big Red, Mother of Dukes, the whispered monogram M-D-, you know them.

The Large, Inconvenient Dog. The ur-beast from which all uncontrollable canines take their form. Marmaduke, Clifford, Cujo, Wishbone, Beethoven, all these beasts emerge from the same subconscious archetype of a huge dog whose refusal to come to heel renders your family a laughingstock. Though the nature of the hex changes from manifestation to manifestation, the Large, Inconvenient Dog is an inverted Godhead, each beast just an aspect of the same perverse human need for debasement.

You clean your house as best you can. You compose yourself before stepping outside, praying that it will settle with some other family if it finds you an unsatisfying target, only to discover your lawn torn to shreds, pockmarked with holes like the pimply visage of an avid Redditor.

A semicircle of elders have gathered at the end of your driveway. They regard you in grim silence. "Gophers, am I right?" You chuckle. "God damned gophers." Their lips tighten over large, white teeth.

During the drive into town, your family is silent. No one makes eye contact. There is no music on the radio, just static and distant voices hollering about the End Times. You become aware of the thick layer of fur covering the dashboard, as red as a clown's wig. The phantom outline of nose prints fogs up the inside of the glass, which you wipe away furiously at every intersection.

what beasts hunt you?

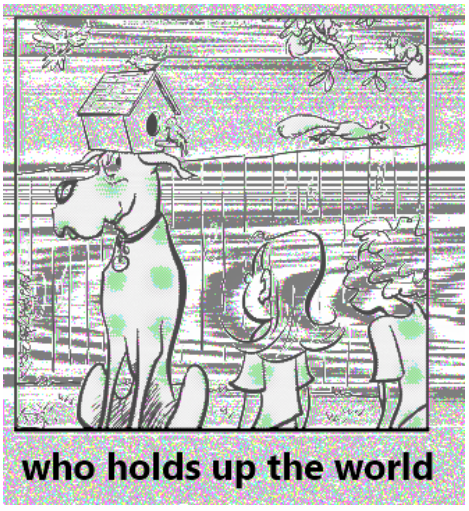
The sign is visible from the parking lot: SERVICE ANIMALS ONLY. You check your palms for leashes, just to be sure.

The basket is filled with shelf-stable provisions. Your children are silent and beg for nothing. Your partner whispers this will pass, we will laugh when it is over and holds your arm close. The cashier takes a single look at you and shakes his head, points for the door. You leave without paying. A group of truants scream-laugh and run away from your car, which now bears a thousand tiny SW's drawn in the dust.

You drive home in a blind panic. News travels inconveniently fast in a town like this. There is already a prayer circle on your yard. It is slightly lopsided, to account for the lumpfucked terrain.

"They've marked us. We've been given over!" Your partner is inconsolable. You usher the children inside while they hyperventilate in the car.

You calmly place your goods on the kitchen table, counting your breaths and trying to will yourself back to normal. Snacks in the cupboard, cereal on the shelf. You think of the liquor atop the fridge as your tongue swells and your mouth dries up. Your son calls to you from his room, and you run, tossing the bright plastic basket to the side. He holds up a rock, with a note attached. "Papa, what's a 'Sacrificial Winslow'?"



my fine, fine teeth

You kneel on his Roadways Toy Car Play Rug, the broken glass somehow less painful than legos. "Kiddo," you rub his shoulders and tousle his hair, "sometimes, when a community does a bad thing, a special kind of dog comes to visit. In order to protect themselves, everyone gets together and chooses just one-"

"Cowards!" Your partner screams from the yard, throwing terracotta flowerpots at the assembled. "Leave us to It, then! Go on! Fuck off! We'll deal with the Marmaduke! You soup-beard old sons of bitches live in safety while we suffer!"

You gather your children in the den, where the sound of your partner assaulting a deacon cannot disrupt what you have to tell them.

"Our lives are going to change. We have a new member of our fam. . . Of the family." You feel like you are going to throw up. You remember fondly the liquor atop the refrigerator. "We're each going to take turns being responsible, so it won't be a lot of work. In fact, it'll be a lot of fun! You kids like dogs, right?" You children regard you blankly. "Haven't you always wanted a dog? Think of all the cool viral content you'll be able to make with your Large, Inconvenient Dog!"

"But, if he's so cool, why don't the other families want him?" Your daughter asks.

"Well-" Your mind floods with images of hapless stooges dragged through the mud, over gravel, shackled by the wrist to hell's worst impulses made manifest in 200 pounds of horny muscle. "The dog doesn't always do what you tell it to. It's not a bad dog, it just. . ." You struggle to avoid terms the children will not understand, terms like judge of the unworthy, sin-eating flesh-excoriator, DharmaDuke. "The dog has a mind of its own, just like we do, kids. It's normal for you two not to listen to your loving parents-" you boop your son's nose, but he does not giggle "-so why would it be any different for the dog? It's a member of the family now, and we're going to get through it together because we're a family, and that's what family does."

Your children stare at you, unmoved. You try explaining that this will eventually become artistic fodder for an excellent New Yorker article, despite knowing that there has never been an excellent New Yorker article. You tousle their hair and leave before making things worse.

a fine snack you'll make

As you close the door, there is a clap of thunder. The house goes dark. Through the windows, you see the sun shrink behind a stormwall. You hear the clink and splash of a whiskey on the rocks being made in the den. Your den.

Heading downstairs, you find your partner has wreathed the den in scented candles, reeking so thick it coats the air as viscous as the floor in Elon Musk's cologne pit. Something sits in your recliner, your drink in its hand. You step closer, you see it wears your khakis, your sweater-vest. You call

out for your partner, though you know they will not come.

The beast moves, and as it moves you catch a glimpse of candy-apple red fur, like a fire truck from Hell. It pulls something off its neck and throws it at you. You flinch as it lands at your feet, a thick woven strip of leather complete with shiny silver buckle. A collar. Your collar, now.

Welcome to Pet Ownership.

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

4.23 Everything You Knew About Dinosaurs Was WRONG

Wednesday, Apr 22, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Pictured: Dinosaurs in their natural habitat

Misconception: Dinosaurs Drove Cars

This is WRONG.

The cars were too tiny for them to fit into. Remember, dinosaurs were all bigger than skyscrapers! How the heck is an extra big skyscraper going to fit into an extra normal-sized car? No, not by turning on its side then coming in at just the right angle. The answer is it's not.

And so dinosaurs could not fit into the many cars, single-engine aircraft, canoes, and toll booths that littered the Dinosaur Period landscape.

Misconception: All Dinosaurs Were Bigger Than Skyscrapers

This is SUPER WRONG.

Some - but not all - dinosaurs were born as babies. While larger than cars, these dinosaurs were still smaller than skyscrapers.

Misconception: Dinosaurs Had Feathers

MEGA-WRONG.

Birds are everywhere. If dinosaurs were just birds it would be super disappointing because we already have plenty of those.

Dinosaurs were, in fact, snakes that dramatically pushed aside giant plants and yelled all the time.

Misconception: Dinosaurs Were All Killed Off By A Meteor

BZZZT. Oh by the way that bzzt meant you were WRONG AGAIN.

Okay, do you really believe this? Think about it. All those dinosaurs. A single meteor. What are the odds that every dinosaur in the world was standing on one spot at the EXACT time that a rock from outer space hit that exact same location?

The odds of that happening are incredibly low. They're almost as low as a person getting hit by lightning, or rolling a single die and getting a six.

What actually killed the dinosaurs was complicated.

Have you ever seen the first Resident Evil movie? There's a scene where a military guy gets locked in a hallway that turns out to be trapped. It's a laser room. The lasers come at him slowly one at a time and he avoids them. Then the lasers all turn on at once in a grid and he's like "Oh shit" because here comes an unavoidable wall of lasers and the lasers slice him into hundreds of cubes.

That's what happened to the dinosaurs.

Misconception: The Word "Dinosaur" Means "Terrible Lizard"

ULTRA-WRONG.

The word "dinosaur" is a combination of two words, "dino" (short for dinosaur) and "saursaursaur" (long for dinosaur).

Misconception: T-Rex Was The King Of The Dinosaurs

WRONG.

Dinosaurs had no king. Rather than establishing a traditional monarchy, they adopted a parliamentary republic with citizen-initiated referenda.

Misconception: Velociraptors Knew How To Open Doors By Turning Doorknobs

Believe it or not, this misconception is also WRONG

Doorknobs and locking mechanisms hadn't been invented yet in dinosaur times. When a velociraptor needed to get into a power generator facility or a server room, it simply pushed against the door to make it turn on its hinge.

Misconception: Dinosaurs Had Dinosaur Teeth

Thoroughly WRONG.

Dinosaurs didn't have big pointy teeth. Instead, they had gigantic human teeth that were nearly perfect cubes.

These teeth were completely flat and smooth on all sides, which prevented dinosaurs from puncturing and chewing. This is why most dinosaur murders were believed to have been committed via poisoned wine.

These teeth were pearly white. Even whiter than their universal albino skin.

Finally, every dinosaur kept its mouth open to display these teeth and their pink gums which protruded like overfilled garbage bags.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

4.24 The NFL Draft Will Combine New Tech with Old Coaches and It Will Be a Glorious Train Wreck

Thursday, Apr 23, 2020 by The NFL Commissioner (@evanhoovler)

I know the headlines: Virtual NFL Draft Walkthrough Was a Mess

Sure, ideally the walkthrough caught all the potential issues. But, in reality, I am in charge of guiding 32 ancient billionaires through a high-pressure, timed scenario in two separate online meeting tools.

I am the NFL commissioner, I have a beer stein full of whiskey, it is time for the NFL draft, I hate my life and everyone in it.

"Bengals, you are on the clock!" I crisply report, switching the camera to Bengals owner & GM Mike Brown.

"He says we're on the clock. How do I unmute this?" the 84-year-old Mike Brown asks. He then mutes himself, looks directly at the camera, says something I cannot hear. He unmutes himself, "they're not saying anything. Did they hear me? These Zoom computers are horrible."

Mike Brown mutes himself, presumably to repeat his pick. I would unmute him, but I am not the host of the call (the Houston Texans megalomaniacal Coach Bill O'Brien insisted on hosting). I unmute myself, "MIKE ARE YOU PICKING JOE BURROW? JUST NOD IF YOU'RE PICKING JOE BURROW."

Mike nods.

"Is it my turn yet?" inquires 77-year-old Cowboys owner Jerry Jones.

"No, Jerry, it's not your turn. It's Dan Snyder's turn."

Jerry continues, "Is Joe Burrow still available? I'll take him."

"JERRY HE'S NOT AVAILABLE AND IT'S NOT YOUR FREAKIN' TURN!" I scream. I forgot to mention all of this is televised so I can't swear at these incompetent geriatrics, "WASHINGTON, IT'S YOUR TURN!"

Redskins brass Dan Snyder and Ron Rivera, who are a combined 113 years old, come on camera. They are in the same room, something this whole complicated set up was specifically designed to avoid happening, "Hey, we're worried our computer got hacked with a coronavirus, it says, 'Google Chrome is not responding.'"

They're picking Chase Young. Everyone knows they're picking Chase Young since the minute the last season ended. I just need them to say Chase Young, oh God why won't they just say Chase Young.

"JUST SAY CHASE YOUNG!" I say, spittle calmly flying onto my laptop screen.

"I got that error to go away, but now it says, "reporting details of error to Google," does that mean we got hacked?"

"I'm just writing Chase Young down on the official form," I sigh, "and if you don't say anything by the end of my sentence that means you are okay with it."

"If they're going with Chase Young, then I pick Joe Burrow..."

"SHUT UP JERRY IT'S NOT YOUR TURN. YOU PICK 17th WHICH PROBABLY WE WON'T EVEN GET TO UNTIL TOMORROW AT THIS RATE!" I take a deep breath of whiskey, "Detroit,

you're on the clock."

Lions GM Bob Quinn comes on the screen. He has a Winnebago parked in his driveway, inside of which is the Lions' IT Director.

"Yeah, we'll take Jeff Okudah."

I'm stunned. For a few moments it doesn't even register with me that they have picked an actual player in the actual NFL Draft. Maybe we're done with the shenanigans. Maybe those were just early hiccups and everything will sail smoothly from here on.

"Giants, you're up."

69-year-old New York GM Dave Gettleman pops up on screen, "I'm having trouble connecting to the meeting, not sure I got the right address."

"No, Dave, you're in the meeting. Pick now."

"The address I got was h-t-t-p-s-colon-diagonal line-diagonal line-n-f-l-period-zoom-period-u-s-diagonal line-j-diagonal line-nine-five-eight-four-"

"DAVE YOU'RE IN THE CALL! PICK NOW FOR THE LOVE OF JESUS!"

"... I'm in the call?"

"Yes!"

"... okay, I'm trading my pick with New Orleans."

"No."

"No?"

"No trading picks. I won't allow it, or anything else that could make my job more impossibly complicated than it is right now!"

"Okay, then I pick Tua."

"Great now it's-"

"And then I trade Tua to New Orleans for their first and second round picks."

"Fine!" I open up my Google spreadsheet that no one else has opened or looked at. I put New Orleans in the fourth spot where New York was. I then go to the second round... and realize New Orleans doesn't have a second round pick."

"Dave you can't make that trade. New Orleans doesn't have a second round pick."

"...they don't?"

"No."

"Oh, well. Just give us Joe Burrow, then."

Slumping my shoulders, I write "Joe Burrow" next to the New York Giants. I also add Joe Burrow to Dallas' because why the hell not. At least that saves me the time of having to guide Jerry Jones through the whole process. Everyone can just share Joe Burrow, I don't care anymore.

5 picks down.

Just 250 more to go.

Evan Hoovler and a whole team of goon comedy writers will be live tweeting dozens of jokes throughout

the entire three-hour first round of the NFL draft tonight! #draftjam

-∼The NFL Commissioner (@evanhoovler)

4.25 How A Taco Bell Competition Changed My Life

Monday, Apr 27, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

Around four years ago, while I was attending Community College and living in my parents' basement, I saw an ad for a Taco Bell "Indie Game Garage" promotion. It presented an opportunity for aspiring game developers to send in their upcoming game's trailer, alongside a basic description, to have a chance at winning 500 TACO-BUCKS, along with EXCLUSIVE ACCESS to some gaming figureheads, whatever that meant. At the time I was in the process of creating a genuine video-game alongside three longtime buddies of mine, so I thought why the hell not, and sent in our form. I told my friends after the fact, and we all had a good laugh about the opportunity to win taco bucks. We more or less forgot about it after that.

A couple months later, we got an email. We, along with 19 other developers, had "won." After filling out some extra info, and reading the fine print extra carefully, our $500 in taco bux were on their way, and I got an invite to a dinky little Discord channel, where we would allegedly have "access" to some of gaming culture's biggest stars. As the contest winners trinkled into the Discord, there wasn't much aim at the start. We would just talk amongst ourselves, ask one another about the games we're working on, and share a sense of confusion on what exactly this "access" perk is supposed to entail. Eventually an official Taco Bell representative popped in, and informed us that they were going to schedule specific days for us to hop on different group calls with each of the VIP influencers, and that we would have the ability to publish Devlog-style posts on the OFFICIAL TACO BELL INDIE GAME GARAGE BLOG and participate in the GAME GARAGE FORUM.

We were ecstatic, were these official sites going to be promoted to the official Taco Bell social media platforms? Eyeballs are everything for indie developers, after all. No, we were informed. By the time the contest had run its course, The Head Locos Tacos Honchos had since moved on from this promotion, and would no longer be interested in featuring it. You could almost hear the sigh coming

from the representative on the other end of the keyboard, as they tried to express mildly their frustration with their overlords so swiftly abandoning their little piece of the marketing machine. Knowing that, you can guess how many developers utilized that special, tucked away blog.

For a while, the Discord just went silent, and I took the minor victory for what it was, in Taco-Bucks. My buddies and I would end our little weekend development sessions carpooling to the nearest Taco Bell and eating like the 5-Layer Cheesy Beany Supreme Royalty we were, and started ironically displaying our "award" on the game's upcoming page. Development continued as normal, with us slogging through learning a new engine since our previous one had failed us (long story), all the while trying to finish up our respective degrees.

Eventually, the Discord was pinged, and we were informed that the first AMA with one of the special guests had been scheduled, with a Twitch star named Jericho. Sure enough, within the week I had popped into a call with the other developers, and with a ding, apparent internet hotshot Jericho popped in to chat with us. He was just as confused about how this was supposed to go as the rest of us and embarrassingly, it appeared almost none of the developers actually watched Jericho's work before. Jericho laughed, mentioning that he was only briefed to offer "advice" to us developers, but being a Twitch streamer and not a developer, found himself puzzled on what he might offer. Being young and feeling fairly out of my element, I asked some very basic questions about being in an influencer's shoes, but every developer in the chat knew exactly what outcome we were really hoping for. Inevitably, the conversation was skewed towards "So... You think you could play our games when they come out?"

Every AMA from then played out in a similar fashion. Chit-chat, confusion, and morsels of basic questions, before asking that make-or-break question. Jessica Chobot, will you play our game? Jack Pattillo from Rooster Teeth, will you play our game? Swiftor, will you play our game? Each time, answers were similar. Usually something non-committal, at best was Jack Pattillo telling us that if we included "Taco Bell Indie Garage" in our press email when the game came out, he would at least ensure the email gets opened. These folks didn't owe us anything at all of course, since they were just paid to chat with us, so we were grateful for any promises they offered. We were hungry little developers all just trying our best to make the most out of this goofy setup, after all. Well, not hungry I guess. We had tacos.

When the last AMA passed, the Discord remained quietly open, while we were told the underutilized websites would be shut down. God forbid. Most developers fell out of using the Discord, in turn just going back to working on our respective games. About a year or so later, our own game *We Need To Go Deeper* was reaching a vaguely releasable state, and in a desire to start bringing in some sort of income with our now 4-year long project, we made the decision to release it through Steam's Early Access program. Sure enough, now was the time to follow up on those promises.

We shot our Taco Bell emails to all the VIP influencers, among many, many more emails to every press outlet and influencer we could think of. You only have one launch, after all, or so the advice went at the time. Now the waiting game began, as our embargo date for coverage approached. Around this time we got a response from one of the Taco Bell influencers, Jack Pattillo of Rooster Teeth, who asked if the multiplayer was functional at this time, to which I excitedly replied "Yes of course! Both LAN and Online are fully functional!"

My message caused a problem that day for our network programmer Jordan, who I later found out had to madly scramble to fix a huge LAN bug that had come to his attention in time for Jack's

play session. While our online functionality was ready to go, LAN had recently broken, and so after Jordan's rush to fix it, all we could do is hope things went smoothly enough for them and wait to see if a video would surface. Finally, our coverage embargo date arrived, and it was time to see how our efforts paid off.

At first things were quiet, a few videos from smaller channels surfaced, but not much noise was being made. It wasn't until the week after that things started to pick up. PCGamer picked up the story, followed by RockPaperShotgun, and even the rarely-updated front page of The Indie Game Source covered the game's launch! (the writer having apparently seen it through posts I made in our very own Something Awful game development threads, I should note) But the momentum really hit it off once we were greeted with Rooster Teeth's coverage, a Let's Play video that immediately splashed us with 865 wishlists the day it came out, and took us from a 1-2 daily wishlist rate to 150-200 daily wishlists. We had gained more wishlists in the days that followed than we had in the game's entire year having a live store page. Soon other influencers took notice. In the coming months *We Need To Go Deeper* would be covered by even bigger channels that garnered millions of views, and even get featured on a short-lived Disney television show made for tube-tastic gamers. For shizzle.

While we weren't a household name or anything, for all intents and purposes we had created an indie hit. We were making enough off the game at that point that my wife and I could finally afford to move out of my parents' house and into our own little dinky apartment with our own food and our own cat. Since then I've been making a living doing game development on *We Need To Go Deeper* and other projects full-time, two-plus years of living my dream. My life has certainly changed.

But sometimes, it haunts me to think about how things might have played out had I not seen a fucking *Taco Bell* ad of all things. It gives me cause to wonder how often this sort of thing happens every day. We're certainly not the only game to benefit from senpai Taco Bell noticing us, as the indie darling *Streets of Rogue* is another hit among the taco alumni. Our lives changed, at least in part because some overpaid executive approved and then immediately forgot about some doofy, half-thought-out marketing campaign to help sell more Mountain Dew slushies to stoned gamer bros. Huh.

Nick Lives is a full-time game developer, part-time comedy writer in no small part thanks to the help of a community of game developing goons over on the Something Awful Forums, which you can sign up for now! Wowweee!

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

4.26 Trials Of The Chillsquatch 2: The Lunch Truck of Eternal Satiety

Tuesday, Apr 28, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

This article is part of the Trials of the Chillsquatch series.

Thanks again to Ian BFM Helm for his assistance with this excellent Chillsquatch art.

Welcome, new friends. If you have forgotten we are meditating in the Temple of the Most Chill, and there is an unease at home within me. A pernicious voice who whispers that my chill is but a thin veneer over a rageful demon core of a heart which will never know rest.

Have you ever heard that voice, before? Or are you so undifferentiated from the anger which wears you like a glove that you cannot tell where your pain stops? Freedom starts with the first step outside of yourself. For me, the first step was fleeing my family and taking up residence in a remote monastery. You might enjoy downloading a mindfulness app, or telling your spouse you know about their affair.

The Chillsquatch Contemplates Eternity

But, like all good times, my tenure at the monastery was blessed to come to a close. All I could learn from hanging out with the Chill, doing Chill activities, simply taught me the customs of Chill people, it did little to internalize the blessing of Chill within me. I was distraught. Dismayed! I sat on a log and stared out at a sunset, sighing heavily at regular intervals. Though the rage did not return, I simply felt... Unseated in things. Thus, my decision to travel the world and become the Chillsquatch.

One morning, I was journeying through Toronto (the chillest part of Canada) when I came upon a lunch truck serving a park full of families. A single chef worked a broad griddle, and the families tucked wads of bills and handfuls of coins into a convenient bucket. One by one, they were handed a plate full of steaming food, mushroom-burgers and piles of limp griddled vegetables, hotdog buns slathered with onions and baby bok choi in a soy ginger sauce.

It smelled like the kitchen in a general's palace. Having no money, I could only proffer a quarter of a honeycomb I found adhered to the hair behind my ear. The chef stopped my wrist with a spatula, and simply smiled.

"Let us talk, when my shift is ended." I nodded and spent the balance of my time standing in a sand pit, doing what I imagined was tai chi.

When the sun reached its dramatic zenith and the families headed home for baths and their nightly bingewatches, I headed to the lunch truck. No name nor menu bedecked the surface of the vehicle,

save an understated mural of a river rolling through a pine forest.

"Hello?" I called out, knocking on the awning. Two mushroom burgers sizzled on the grill.

"Hello!" The chef called, popping up. "Did I startle you?" They asked. I shrieked. "Glad to hear it! You may call me The Burgerman. I am preparing you a meal. Come in the truck, we shall discuss your journey."

I needed not ask how they knew I was on a journey. All who succumb to the morphology of the 'Squatch are on some kind of sojourn, their bodies overtaken by a Wanderer's Mission which will outlast every step taken in its answering.

"So what brings you to the Lunch Truck of Eternal Satiety?" He idly flipped his burgers, his paisley apron covered over in stylish enamel pins.

"I seek chill, but my Chill is ruined by my own doubt of my Chill."

The Burgerman nodded slowly. "A persistent voice whose only words undermine your work? Ah! Friend." He chuckled. "You are in luck. Many have walked this path before you. To say it plainly, you doubt that a Chill which can be disrupted cannot be the true Chill?"

"Yes!" I jumped up. "That's it exactly! I fear my search for Chill renders me perpetually unworthy!"

The Burgerman chuckled sadly. "True Chill is not the achievement of Chill, which is always temporary, but the acceptance that even the absence of Chill is passing, and that in time the Chill will return when we are worthy."

"How do I know if I am worthy?" I nearly shouted.

The Burgerman shrugged. "You are worthy. Chill is simply the state of being nonreactive to the world's constant horseshit. There is the Tested, and Untested Chill. The weakness of the monastery is the weakness of every institutional pursuit of Chill. The weight of the people and resources pulls on the world around it, devouring the space and resources till it becomes so insular Chill is all but unavoidable. How easy it is to be Chill when your garden is weeded for you!"

The Burgerman laughed. "How trivial health becomes when you outsource the maintenance of your own body. Those monks aren't Chill, they are Unbothered. Untested. No problems tug at the hem of their Chill, so they have lost the muscle control to maintain it. I promise you, one shift cooking vegetables for diaper-clad picky eaters and their locavore parents, they'd be just as mad as we all are." The Burgerman smiled with his eyebrows only, like two herons alighting upon a log of salami.

"It sounds so simple, and when I meditate I feel like I can almost reach it, but it's when the world reaches up into my brainthoughts and starts throwing challenges at me that I cannot regain my footing." I ran my hand over the dustless dashboard, complete with hula dancing bobble figuring.

"A reaction is a terrible kind of feeling. It rises unbidden, carrying us off the path of our best intent and into territory beyond conscious control. Reacting to something is like riding a Segway off a cliff, the conclusion is inevitable and you regret every moment.

The reaction is the intake of breath. Our response is the exhale. You control the exhale!" He slapped his knee. "The reaction of Chill is not the true Chill, that is but the absence of strife. To breathe in anger and exhale Chill, this is the true Chill. Not until a mood has been passed through the digestive process of strife can it be enjoyed as the true Chill."

I nodded, and stroked my many beards. "So to say a poke bowl shared with friends is the Chillest meal possible, this is untrue as the nature and setting of the meal itself is immaterial to my internal Chill?"

The Burgerman smiled, slowly blinked, and nodded. The entire process took upwards of 5 minutes, his face moving with all the speed of a late summer sunset. "Things that are Chill only possess Chill because they bring forth the Chill which waits within us at all times. Chill becomes the aesthetic which represents Chill, and we become vexed by our pursuit of the aesthetic which was only ever a representation of an internal state."

I nodded. "That sounds right, mostly because, I don't actually understand anything that's happened since I abandoned my family. The only thing I know for certain, is that they are *absolutely* better off for my absence."

The Burgermaster's eyes snapped open in shock. "You, what? Wow, okay, Yikes. Mostly you 'Squatch types are young dudes who thinks philosophy justifies your addiction to psychedelics, but... Damn." The Burgermaster scratched the back of his head. "I suppose you could move back in with your family and apologize for being a weird flaky burden. Or you could spend a year working for me-"

"I accept." I said, leaping to my feat. "Teach me, oh wise greasy hermit."

"You didn't even hear the conditions of the agreement. I'm going to feel like I'm taking advantage of-"

"Don't care!" I decreed. "Cloistering taught me the shape of chill, it is only through cheerful service will I nurture it within my thoughts!"

"No, see, I was going to ask a lot of really unreasonable shit to discourage-"

"There is nothing unreasonable in the quest for Chill!" I grabbed a handful of cabbage from a cutting board and slapped it on the grill. They sizzled next to the now thoroughly burnt mushroom burgers.

"Hey, guess not." The Burgerman handed me their apron. "Don't burn anything down. Deliveries are weekly and there's a safe under the driver's seat, which incidentally is also your bed. Keep a knife in your teeth when you sleep because you *will* get mugged. If the city comes knocking this place is legally registered as three toilets. Don't burn anything down, I'll either see you in a month or never again." The Burgerman produced a frayed fisherman's cap and suitcase from nowhere, and made a hasty exit.

I watched him bowl over two joggers and a Pokemon Go dweeb in his haste, leaving behind a comically thick dust trail. I stared off into the sunset, smiling and waving, waving and staring, not even noticing the line of hungry drunks and late-night LARPers queuing up behind me.

"Hey!" Shouted a man in unseasonably casual sports attire. "Do you serve food or just wistful gazes?!" He snarled. "Cause I've got a lot of exes I've been thinking about..."

"My friend, you're in luck." I said, donning the apron. "We've got food and wistful gazes aplenty, here at the Lunch Truck of Eternal Satiety."

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

4.27 Top-Notch Lord of the Rings Knock Knock Jokes

Wednesday, Apr 29, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Lembas.

Lembas who?

Lembas in already, we're cold out here!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Galadriel.

Galadriel who?

I sure am *Galadriel* (real glad) I brought a coat, because it's cold out here!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

One Ring.

One Ring who?

One Ring (wondering) when you're gonna open the door and let me in, it's cold out here!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Frodo.

Frodo who?

I'm *Frodo* (afraid of) what might happen if you never open that door!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Isildur.

Isildur who?

There *Isildur* (is a door) between me and the warm interior of that hobbit house!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Elrond.

Elrond who?

Standing here in the cold, wondering when you're going to get *Elrond* (around) to opening the door.

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Mithril.

Mithril who?

It would give *Mithril* (me a thrill) if you opened up the door and let me in from the cold!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Gandalf.

Gandalf who?

Please take your *Gandalf* (hand off) your ear and put it on the doorknob, then turn. It's cold out here!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Gondor.

Gondor who?

I wish the archway in front of me had a *Gondor* (gone door) so I could walk inside. It's cold out here!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Moria.

Moria who?

Open the door, I can't take much *Moria* (more of) this cold weather!

BONUS ENT PUNS

What's good for the spruce (Ent) is good for the Gandalf!

With Frodos like these, who needs Ents (the trees)?

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

4.28 The Greatest Video Game of All Time Is Finally Here!

Thursday, Apr 30, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

Hey, Gamers: Do you like Super Mario, Doom, Animal Crossing, Forza, Civilization, Slay the Spire, and sandwiches?

Then you'll LOVE the hot new release: Maximum Outer Space

In Maximum Outer Space, you can smash your character's head on a brick to start your sports car. Once you've allocated enough citizens to horticultural resources, you'll drive at breakneck speed through the garden, trying to plant as many vegetables as possible. Better stalk up on roots from the local store run by an adorable cyborg walrus!

Want to start over? Just tap the A button and a nuclear bomb will destroy your entire town!

Once you grow 500 vegetables, you'll be able to make feed and start your own pig farm. Pigs can be used to harvest footballs. Using our new motion capture camera, you'll throw those footballs to stave of hordes of oncoming zombies. But don't hit the captured Princess Corncan, or you'll lose 500 experience notches!

The game produces flashing colors that cure depression in epileptics!

Multiply the fun by hopping into multiplayer mode. Your car will fuse together with cars from players around the world to form a giant robot. Use your robot to push the bomb-laden minecart into your home base, which is made of Legos. Form the broken Legos into 8-bit machine guns you can use to propel your robot over the frictionless surface of the Royal Coliseum!

Our in-controller microphone lets you communicate raid plans with players who may or may not speak your language!

Earning all this gol (the in-game currency) can build up quite a hunger. Time to hop into the enchanted volcano and visit the sandwich shop. Strap on the special VR headset, and experience a sub-eating experience like none other. It's just like eating a regular sandwich, except without all that boring taste and nutrition!

Our neural sensors read your brainwaves for enhanced gameplay and ad inception!

So rush to the nearest store immediately, don't even stop to put on your Covid mask. If that store isn't open, throw a brick through the window and leave your money on the counter.

Maximum Outer Space: A game so amazing it qualifies as an essential service!

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

Chapter 5

May

5.1 GET MOTIVATED!

Monday, May 04, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

In these troubling times, motivation is at an all-time low. Lucky for you, we have the tips you need to get that rear in gear! Corona Virus? More like, Sharona Bye-Bye-rus!

TIP #1 - Bargain!

When you find yourself struggling to lift yourself out of bed in the morning, it can be helpful to bargain with the evil force keeping you there, as it sits atop your chest always just out of sight. Repeating its Latin name aloud, and bartering the lives of a few precious relatives you feel detached enough to depart from can be enough to convince it to part ways. Once you hear it slither out of the room, and your eyes flake open, you'll know it worked. Congratulations, you are free!

TIP #2 - Envision Your Future!

Now that you are physically capable of getting out of bed, it's time to charge up that mental capacity to bring yourself to do it. One excellent way to motivate yourself to do so, is to envision your future. Imagine yourself 20 years from now, still laying in bed. What state are you in? In all likelihood, you're a corpse. Rotting in these very sheets, coating the mattress in a putrid concoction of tissue and mold. Small fungal growths have started to develop in your now emptied eye sockets, which were eaten away years ago by the rats in your walls. All because, 20 years ago right here right now, you decided you didn't want to leave the bed. Congratulations! You got out of bed!

TIP #3 - Start Small!

Now that you are out of bed, you are likely overwhelmed by the tasks that lie ahead. Assure yourself that it's okay to start small, and work your way up to those larger tasks! In this case, start your day off by accomplishing one small thing, like paying off that loan in full. Come on, look, if you add up all your existing savings and investments, throw in your latest paycheck in its entirety, and sell a few pictures of your feet online, you could easily wipe that slate clean TODAY. What you'll lose in financial security, you'll more than make up for in newfound MOTIVATION. Congratulations! You paid off your loan!

TIP #4 - Plant The Seeds!

Now that you've accomplished something, it's time to let that act plant the seeds of motivation and let it encourage you throughout your day. Let the knowledge that you no longer have the funds or financial stability to pay rent, buy groceries, or pay any bills this upcoming month sink into the soft soils of your mind, and prep them for motivational growth. As you start your workload throughout the day, you can then pluck the fruits of those thoughts at any time, and boost your motivation in the process! Gosh, not feeling up to sending that email? Pluck that fruit, bite into the newfound thought it has bloomed into, such as "What will I write on my cardboard sign when I'm out on the streets in a month?" and congratulations! You're working!

TIP #5 - Fester The Fruit!

If you can help it, try not to pluck every thought fruit from the mind soils, for these fruits can grow and mutate into much more powerful motivators for when the going gets tough. Save some for a rainy day, and let the fruit fester! Try to avoid scratching that itch on the back of your head, for it halts the growth. The bulge will increase in size over time, rising like fleshy dough. This is good. When the bulge has reached the size of your fist, minutes will feel like months, and the itch will become unbearable. This is also good. Keep it up!

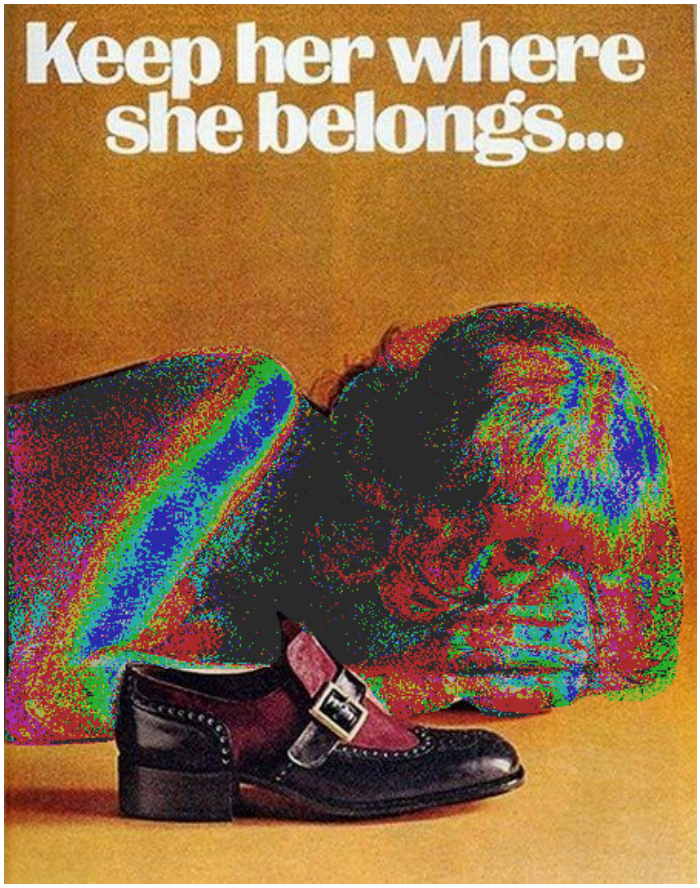
TIP #6 - Become Open-Minded!

The bulge is now the same size as your head, and has started growing a distorted, cartoonish face of its own. Good! The time has come. You'll need a scalpel or else just a small household precision-cutting utensil. Feel around the back of your head for the spot that cries out most for a good scratch, and give it a gentle poke. As your head deflates, take a deep breath inward and let your empty sack-face be refilled with the airs of motivation. Let the rapid visions of your many possible deaths flow through you. Live through each possibility. Make tangible their sensation. Your mind has been reopened to the possibility-space. Matter is malleable to you now, like pottery. The world is spinning at your fingertips. Congratulations! Now you can do anything you set your mind to!

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

5.2 EVERYMAN: A Product from Unilever™

Tuesday, May 05, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)



Are you the buyer or the product?

Are you at home? Work? School? Parkour gym? Are you in a car? Restaurant? Are you ordering daquiries in a car-based restaurant while you make important business calls on your table-sized smartphone? Brilliant. You can be in a location even moreso with EVERYMAN.

What is EVERYMAN? Why, it's for you and me, partner! Formulated to do what it needs to in the places where it's wanted. Organic and gluten free variants available to experienced purchasers. EVERYMAN does not show up on drug tests and ships discreetly from H^H^H^H. EVERYMAN: Not just a man, EVERYMAN.

Who needs EVERYMAN? I'm shocked a Rhodes scholar like yourself even has to ask. If you're a guybro dudefella who hain't been able to muster the same whiz-bang giddyup as when he was younger, you should take EVERYMAN. If you bust your achin' back haulin' marlins for Skipper, brother you should already be taking EVERYMAN. Even harried housewives who struggle to wield a Gravity Hammer can supplement their cob salad and wine diet with a half-tablet nightly.

You've got a good house, on a good street. Your car is good, smelling of rich leather and pipe tobacco, and you acquired these things through the use of Commerce. Your life is good. So good! But is it so good that it couldn't be *great*?

EVERYMAN has a superlitude of medically identified engreateners, including Smiletite, Brainsphere, and Meat. It has the nootropics praised by the internet's most hatewatched libertarians. Phytonutrients, both micro and macro, in flavors previously thought impossible. Blockchain verified vitamins, whatever the heck that means. CDB dog treats, why not?

Taste EVERYMAN: ∼**C L O U D**∼ the world's first vapeworthy body-gruel. Cram our flavor goo in your Lungduster custom rig, decagrams at a time. Carve out a walnut sized glob of our earwax looking bullshit and blast it through your awful skull. EVERYMAN vapes now!

You've forgotten how to jerk off without a cruel goth mistress whispering instructions into your noise canceling headphones. EVERYMAN can change that, for the better. The cruelest goths imaginable will descend upon your modest home to insult your decor and choice in table settings. They will crawl over your nice appliances, hissing and cackling at the dust they discover. They will tear free your molding and demand you install tacky vinyl prints they bought from Hobby Lobby. You will stand proudly before them, flaccid as a Hannity punchline, not even jerking off a little.

EVERYMAN: We're Weird About Jerking Off, Now"

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

5.3 Mount & Blade 2: The Adventures of Lunk

Wednesday, May 06, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

Lunk Galoot and his family crest, The Uniforce

By virtue of one thousand pieces of unearned gold and the fact that my floppy white buttcheeks are planted on the top of a horse, I am a leader of soldiers.

Well, I say soldiers. What I mean is four grubby drifters with spears and more ear hair than combat experience.

And how do I lead these soldiers? By pulling up a command menu and completely panicking as a group of enemy bandits crests a hill bellowing their mighty battlecry of, "Bleargh!"

Shit. Shit shit shit. There are like six different types of order! And each one has a subdirectory of specific orders! A lesser man would be frozen by the overwhelming number of possibilities in the face of mortal danger. I, being a leader, think on my feet.

By which I mean I accidentally tell my horse to move forward while I fumble with the orders. Within moments I am in a field directly between the two armies, utterly alone.

A rock sails past my head. With a dignified yelp, I turn the horse in a random direction and speed up. With the timing of a genius I finally issue the "Charge!" command to my troops just as I run into a tree.

Rocks pelt my back, my elbow, my horse. Jeez these guys really love their rocks. Or maybe they hate their rocks, given the force and speed with which they are being launched away from the bandits' bodies and towards mine.

In a rare moment of introspection, I suppose that this is what it means to become an adventurer. To stride forth upon lands unknown, through the mud and the cold and the insects, and to wring meaning out of this miraculous life by throwing fucking rocks at strangers' heads.

Another rock clangs off my helmet. Awkwardly walking my horse backwards, I note that the battle

has begun. Nine filthy idiots pressed against one another - a five-foot clump of elbows and grunts in the center of an idyllic autumn clearing.

What's this? The enemy is so focused on my hired goons that they have left their backs turned to me? Ho ho, the rock target becomes the former-rock-target-turned-hero! As the timeless expression goes.

I ready my bow and arrow. Charging forward at unreasonable speed, I take aim. The chaos recedes as a bubble of calm certainty envelops me. Hands, bow, arrow, target are all one. With a twang I let loose. The arrow sails towards the enemy. And lands in one of my soldiers' thigh.

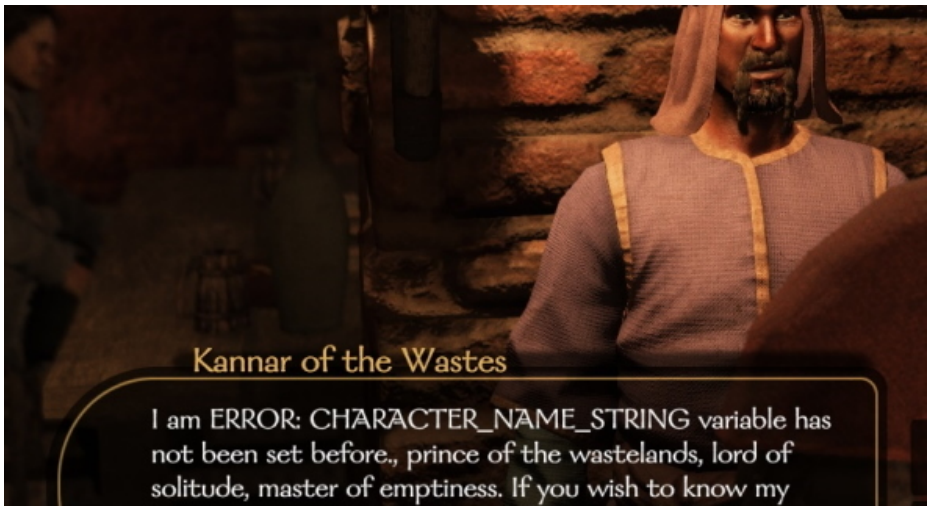
Flustered, I draw my sword and charge. It's impossible to miss from close range. Always eager to accomplish the impossible, my sword harmlessly whiffs through the air as I pass within inches of all five enemies at my horse's top speed.

Turning my horse around, I charge again. And miss. No matter how close I get to these bandits it's like waving a sausage at the moon.

For my third attempt I charge at the slowest possible speed and hope for a different outcome. The outcome is different. I am pulled from my horse and stomped unconscious.

But in their eagerness to take out history's greatest tactician, the enemy exposed their flank to my soldiers. A few spear pokes in the back later and victory is ours. My men drunkenly cheer and pump their fists in celebration above my broken body.

Just as I planned!


Kannar of the Wastes
I am ERROR: CHARACTER_NAME_STRING variable has not been set before., prince of the wastelands, lord of solitude, master of emptiness. If you wish to know my

In the coming days I learn a lifetime of lessons. Enough to begin a book about strategy, Lunk Galoot's Art of Lord. If I had to narrow this book down to three principles they would be:

1. When an enemy offers to settle things with a one-on-one duel (this happens all the dang time), always choose "I don't fight duels with scoundrels!" and let your guards swarm him or her. That's chivalry.
2. If you get within rock throwing distance of a man with a rock you might get hit with a rock.
3. You will never hit an enemy from the back of a horse. It's just not possible.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

5.4 Covid and Our Mental Health (Part 1)

Thursday, May 07, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

This article is part of the Covid & Our Mental Health series.

Part 1 of 5: Accepting our Meltdowns

John von Neumann once said, "in mathematics, you don't understand things. You just get used to them."

He also said, "if you want to grab your readers' attention, never open with a quote about mathematics, Evan, you idiot, you complete imbecile!" But I'm going to pick and choose, here.

The same is true for a lot of changes that happen to our world post-Covid: We don't understand a lot of them, but we desperately need to get used to them. However, getting used to them is not easy: It often involves going through denial, anger, bargaining, and depression before finally arriving at an uneasy acceptance of the fracture that has occurred to modern life. The five stages of grief. You know I love the five stages of grief: They're the best worst thing, ever!

Coping with this plague also involves having meltdowns.

Pictured: An expert in coping with global pandemic. No, seriously!

Normally, meltdowns are seen as bad. From an early age we are trained to express our issues without raising our voices and pounding our fists on the ground and sticking our remotes up our butts.

Now, I am not a licensed therapist. I'm just a painfully introspective guy going through all of this with all of you. Still, I can say with confidence that, in this specific situation, meltdowns are good.

This epidemic isn't a bump in the road. This isn't even a generation-defining event: it's much bigger than that. Once-in-a-lifetime is a phrase used to describe an event that happens super rarely. Still it's been an entire lifetime, 80 years, since the last hugely world-altering event (the debut of Captain America). So this is less-than-once-in-a-lifetime. Somewhere in our DNA it is inscribed that we

need to react towards bad news by becoming a screaming, crying mess. If now isn't the time to do it then when the hell is?

Becoming a temporary wreck means that you are processing this global crisis, that you are making your way toward the stage of acceptance. If you haven't become a tragic mess at least once during this ordeal, strongly consider working your way out of the denial stage: There are many more stages to work through to get to some semblance of normal. Yes, I just stated that not expressing a mental health issue is itself a mental health issue: Our world has shattered, everyone is going to have mental health issues. Plus it's the perfect time of year: May appears to have a correlation with people losing their minds.

Having a day to celebrate mothers and a day to celebrate veterans brings up a lot of PTSD for Americans

Okay, so now that we're no longer in denial about the value of meltdowns, we can get to my main point: You need to make sure you have your meltdowns safely.

Get ready for the anger stage: Across the world, domestic violence calls have shot up during the lockdown. Not only that, areas with a decrease in domestic violence calls are pretty sure it's because the abused can't get out and make the report.

That's an example of a severely unsafe meltdown. Now, naturally I am not a domestic abuser. If I was I wouldn't be spending time writing this column, I would be seeking help (for the stab wounds my wife would no-doubt inflict upon me). But I do sometimes have unsafe meltdowns. Even I, whose life is always complete chaos (i.e. I have small children) find reality a bit too chaotic for me to calmly take in. Sometimes I yell at my family over nothing. Once in a while, I have brief thoughts of self harm and, instead of telling a loved one for support, I just bury them. While clearly not as severe as domestic violence, those actions are still unsafe.

Now I can't just drop everything when I get overwhelmed: I've got responsibilities like my kids and my job and my overwhelming addiction to Slay the Spire. So, I try to schedule my meltdowns. A few times a week, my wife will watch the kids while I go somewhere safe and lose my mind. If I don't feel like melting down, I just become a frigid emotional brick for a while, which seems to provide some relief. It's contained, it's safe, and it's necessary.

If you have already been having safe meltdowns, congratulate yourself. You're doing better than me

The beer I guzzle during these meltdowns is also necessary. Don't question my process!

and billions of other people. You are doing better than the hundreds of thousands who are throwing tantrums by going out in public without masks and without social distancing.

Take a moment to think back over the past few weeks and check if you've been having safe meltdowns. If you've been directing them at loved ones, reach out to those loved ones about your need for a safe way to fall apart. They will be motivated to help: It'll stop you from being a dick to them.

If you've had thoughts of self-harm, first of all know this: Those feelings are normal, and having them is OK. Modern culture has a stigma about needing to deny that people have thoughts of self-harm to the point that obituaries frequently omit stating suicide was the cause of death. So what's not okay is suppressing or masking these feelings. Reach out to a loved one you trust and discuss how you feel. Failing that, here are suicide hotlines sorted by country.

You may have spotted my pattern: Reach out to a loved one for relief. Isolation has caused a lot of people to forget that we need contact with loved ones every day. They care about you, so they will understand. And, if they don't understand, schedule safe meltdown time, anyway. Because they don't have to understand your need for regular, safe meltdowns...

They just have to get used to them.

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-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

5.5 A PRINCESS MOST TERRIBLE IS BORN

Friday, May 08, 2020 by Charlesaxier IX, House Oster (@distastefulman)

This article is part of the The Cursed King series.

THESE WORDS HEED - TOWNSBERGERS OF LACAVIA

BY DECLARATION OF THE ROYAL HOUSE OF OSTER ALL TOWN CRIERS ARE TO BRAY THIS INTO THE EARS OF PASSERSBY AND BAZAAR GOERS OF EVERY TOWN IN THE HOUR THE SUN IS RISEN HIGHEST IN THE HEAVEN

Noblemen, Merchants, Peasants, and Swineherds alike,

By now you have most certainly received word from the town gossip-hens that your Queen has given birth to yet another of my daughters, Princess Gwenn Marie of House Oster. I can reasonably assume you, my dear subjects, are also speculating about my soul's constitution and whether or not I will be able to endure another affliction this traumatic. For those placing stones in your counting

sack, this is, so far, eleven daughters, each more terrible than the last. We too, like so many who reside near Berwein Castle, live in near constant fear.

Gwen Marie was born healthy. Much too healthy. She has not, does not, and will not cry. Her screams reside only in my mind. They rob me of the only solace I have left - sleep. I stare at her in her tiny baby cage. What a beautiful girl she is. Her eyes black as coal and her golden hair. Tufts of golden locks like a goat"s horns. A devil's crest. She will make a fine queen should she refrain long enough from suckling out the very life essence of her wet nurse.

Like all of my monstrous daughters, Gwen Marie was birthed during an unnatural and possibly unholy event. In this case the moon had swollen to an alarming size, appearing to fill with the milky froth of a lepers' wound. I'm told many of you took refuge in cathedrals or root cellars as hounds across the kingdom stared at the ground, trembling, refusing to eat or take water. Our astronomers and priests have no suitable answer as to why these incessant curses plague us or how we can stop them. They present to me no light with which to guide the kingdom. I am inclined to believe, at this point, it is our collective weakness that brings such regular curses upon our kingdom and not the Night Witch from the western swamps. There will be no more talk of the supposed disrespect I showed the Night Witch when I commemorated my ascent to the throne. I promised you I would drain the swamp and I did, in part, by filling it with exquisite wine. There I watched enslaved nymphs bathe and frocklicked with them merrily. Yes - the wine turned to blood in days. I am told this bloodening was largely unrelated to my modest revelries and entirely warranted indiscretions. I have no reason to believe otherwise.

Lastly, I am regrettably apologizing again for Princess Agnes's continued raids on caravans leaving the port town of Johanton. Though only seventeen, she has killed so many guards posted outside her quarters that we have requested delivery of enchanted unicorn restraints from the dessert empire of Vaznaris. We have tried everything short of shackling her to a door frame and, in truth, we have only forgone this approach due to Agnes's propensity for shredding solid oak as though it were barley chaff. A local smithy reported recently she had destroyed several plows and sets of plate armor after breaking into his shop. He claims she intimidated his wife by eating handfuls of nails while pushing her eyes from the sockets in her skull. I cannot confirm she is capable of such a feat, as we have long since abandoned making eye contact with her. She will be brought under control, in time, with the aid of an apothecary's powerful sedatives. We ask that you treat her with as much respect and deference as you would award any of the royal family but please, and I cannot stress this enough, do not allow her direct access to any livestock.

THESE WORDS AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT THEREOF IS DECREED BY THE KING AND HIS PRIVY COUNCIL - SUPREME MONARCH OF LACAVIA

-∼Charlesaxier IX, House Oster (@distastefulman)

5.6 Finally, Our Long Laid COVID Plans Are Coming To Fruition

Monday, May 11, 2020 by Illuminati Head Master Leader Man (@slicknicklives)

Fwd: Illuminati Membership - May 2020 Update

Esteemed members of The Illuminati, reward yourselves with back pats of the highest honor, for our COVID-19 plans are coming to fruition exactly as we hoped! Soon, the world will be at our clawtips! The lambs are staying inside their shelters, fearful that they may be responsible for the deaths of elders should they step foot out their doorways! The fools! Little do they know the depths we went toward hoodwinking them so. What little knowledge they had when we concocted the *perfect* hoax, swiftly and slithery we inserted a falsified "Coronavirus" in the minds of the world populace! While these sheep *foolishly* bought into our trickery, we seized the opportunity to release a deathly pathogen upon the world, hand-crafted in our subterranean laboratories! Now these cattle grovel in their homes, while we shall storm the newly abandoned beaches, shedding our fleshy disguises, to finally bask our scales freely in the warm beach sun! This one laughs jovially as they type this very string!

But alas, there is one problem we did not foresee, one that troubles this one so. Those dastardly White American Patriots! No matter how hard we try, they always seem to be one step ahead of us. Their minds are impervious to our tactics, and somehow they always find the hidden messages and penises we put in our media! But how do they keep giving us the slip? Their deviant genius! They spread their infectious ideas via an elaborate underground railroad of public message boards, memes, and church fliers. Slipping just under our mighty media grasp. Some of them even know the truth of our planet's lack of curvature! This one shivers to think what they might do with that forbidden knowledge. This one doesn't know about the rest of you, but this one is not about to show off their scaly, sexually arousing beach body to a couple of crimson capped cretins! We must stop these free-thinkers at all costs!

Now this one knows what you're thinking - let's just summon our global elite military force upon their kind. There's only one problem with that - they have guns!!! Our attack helicopters and stealth jets won't stand a chance against Gus and his loaded Remington as he awaits inside his impenetrable chain link fortress. Additionally, these foul "open carry" laws also prevent our stealthy assault teams

The scenic beaches of Texas, soon ours for the taking!

from flanking them in the open, for these people have the quick-draw speed of a wild west sheriff! No, I'm afraid a direct attack is simply not an option. Their big man guns are scary and frightening, and make this one whimper like a small feminine creature. We must be wise where they are strong. So strong. We must use THE MEDIA.

Yes, yes, our secret weapon shall be THE MEDIA. To halt their deviant voices, we shall order the media to film everything they do and give them a platform. Constantly. Make sure every news outlet in the country is reporting on them, letting them speak their dangerous thoughts for the world to see. It is then we shall strike! We shall then call them terrible names such as "racist" and "asshole", to tarnish their good christian image! These falsehoods will hurt all the more as their many friends of color look upon them with newfound shame, and they shall be cast from society, forced back into their impenetrable chain link fortresses, exactly where we want them!

It is there, we shall come down upon them and take away their only salvation. How shall we take their guns (and also bibles)? With physical force, of course. We shall utilize our attack helicopters and our stealth jets and our assault teams, and lay down the new laws of the land. No Remington can stand a chance against our elite military, after all. Once they are armless or dead, they shall finally fall to our whims, staying indoors like the good sheep that they are, forcibly subjected to our cartoons that turn their children homosexual. The perfect plan!

It is here that we shall move into phase V-9, where the big manly God-fearing men, stripped of their guns and heterosexual spawn, shall be inducted into submission by our VACCINES, which will contain state-of-the-art microchips that were but recently perfected by our very own Bill Gates, known globally for his machines' perfect record of operating functionality. The microchip will grab hold of their blood, and ride it like Splash Mountain all the way into their brain holes, where it will turn their "critical thinking" mind switches to the "off" mode! This one once again finds themselves chortling with vigor at the thought.

Sexual swimwear to which I call the dibs.

It is then, when the children of the world are extremely homosexual, and the adults of the world are turned to submissive servants who only go outside to get groceries while WE CONTROL THE GROCERIES, that we finally shall have our day in the sun. This one doesn't know about the rest of you, but this one has been pale scaled as oblivion for the past few centuries, and this UV lamp just does not do it for them anymore. This has obtained a pair of swim shorts with maximum sex appeal (that really accentuate the cloaca, blink blink), so let us finally *crush the mammalian menace* so we can hit those waves together.

Hail Satan!

-~Illuminati Head Master Leader Man (@slicknicklives)

5.7 We are the Knifedads! Take a SLICE out of DRUGS!

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 by Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

This article is part of the Karate Johnathan: Knifedad Hero series.

Like a puma doing ballet.

The Hero

We are the Knifedads! Hi-YAH! And we're here to teach you kids everyday karate tips as well as REAL practical STREET SMARTS for avoiding drugs and witchcraft! KAPOW!

You know me as Karate Johnathan! Senpai of the Karate Johnathan Dojo of Youtube Knifearobics! You've probably seen compilations of my work on FailBlog, DadLOLs, and America's Most Gruesome Hand Injuries. I invented the Showerknife!. I'm required by the state insurance underwriters association to inform you that you will be personally liable for any accidents that occur today! Hoooo-YAH!

My name is Steeliest Daniel! For the first 27 years of my life the only visual media I was exposed to was a bootlegged VHS of Bloodsport. I was banned from MMA after physically tearing the skin off of a referee's forearms. I was twelve years old, and it was my birthday!

After jumping bail I found work in the Philippines karate chopping government informants at the behest of a corrupt Catholic priest. Eventually my boss was fed through a deli slicer by Duerterte himself, so I started passing resumes around. I was offered amnesty by Erik Prince in exchange for teaching CIA operatives how to-

The... Other Hero

Okay! Thank you Daniel! You didn't mention most of that during your interviews! YIKES! Let's move on to LESSON ONE! FIGHT DRUGS!

Now, people will tell you that drugs can do a lot of things. They can help you care about EDM. Some drugs help you feel great when everything else is

bad. Some drugs make you a really good dancer, even if everyone else says you aren't!

But, more important than that? More important than smoking huge fat salvia joints with cool kids, talking about space in the back of someone's brother's Nissan Golf? Learning karate. And drugs simply cannot teach you that.

Not a single drug will teach you even a second of karate! Believe me, if it was possible to do drugs to get better at karate, I would. I would do anything to improve my already masterful mastery of karate. But I won't do drugs, because I am too busy learning real karate instead. Philosophers refer to this as the Quandary of Karate.

Right you are, Karate. You gotta be careful with your uppers, they provide a snootful of energy which can make you FEEL like you're good at karate, but really all that power just gets wasted on a bunch of needless Bruce Lee war whoops and then the cops show up.

Exactly! If you want to get your heart pumping, just watch kung fu and do the moves you see onscreen! This is actually a great, low cost introductory lesson in the ancient sciences. If you're a kid, be sure to get your youngest brother or sister to help you practice! If your parents get upset, point out how you moved all the furniture to make a bigger fight space. They'll be sure to reward your ingenuity!

Apartment dwellers, don't lose hope. You've got the whole urban playground to practice in! Start by jumping onto or off of things, a staple move in any kung fu master's repertoire. To hone your punches, run through groups of pigeons and swing your arms like a cranky windmill. To get better at kicks, tape knives to your shoes. Fastest way to escalate any situation, in my experience, you just gotta rear up with that leg and BAM! KNIFESHOE!

Not just any Knifeshoe, mind you! As described in his ebook, A Backflip for Freedom, Steeliest Daniel used his time in the Secret Marines to hone the most lethal martial arts move ever invented, the Knifeshoe Backflip Deathkick 360.

He used that secret technique to cut the hand off a Boko Haram radical, seconds before he would have blown up a busful of orphaned nuns who had all been blinded by abortion doctors after their refusal to stop looking at a picture of America.

Karate please, I deserve no praise for that, I was simply doing what any patriot would have done had they found themselves a loose cannon trapped behind enemy lines with nothing left to lose.

Well kids, you're in a treat because Steeliest Daniel will be demonstrating that move for us today! No, I won't!

But we have a dummy and everything!

Darn it Karate, legally that move is too deadly to be performed during peacetimes! You ask me to violate my Warrior's Code Oath. Besides, it would surely inspire some of these children to commit war crimes. Can't have that on my conscience, Johnathan. Not for all the Bitcoin in Mt. Gox.

I respect that. Same reason I chose the philosophy of celibacy, my pheromones are simply much too potent and my animal musk would drive my dad's 23 year old fiance Candy to acts of criminal passion.

That brings us to LESSON TWO! Don't complain, TRAIN!

Did I complain when a maniac with a thirst for vengeance dispatched a kill squad to hunt down my ex and children? No! I used their deaths as an excuse to spend a year ki blasting waterfalls in Asia! And now I know seven, no, NINE different ways to kill a man with my knifeshoes!

Man, I ASKED you about active vengeance quests or feuds, and you said you had none! Don't drag me into this, my fists are weapons of peace!

Relax! Vengeance can wait, I'm too busy being famous for punching bricks on YouTube. Besides, I've got a backup heir with that Reno cake dancer you met at the cockfight.

please stop implicating me in crimes in front of children-

Even if you kiddos don't yet have a blood grudge against a warlord or mafioso, there's plenty you can do to prepare for the day it happens. Buy a few mall katanas. Hide kitchen knives under your pillow, in case of nighttime dicing. Rig up elaborate pullstrings around your house which activate a series of bells, informing you of the locations of intruders. Don't do this if your dad's fiancee's cats are liable to play with them, false positives are insufficient justification for breaking your dad's bullshit "No Midnight Shuriken" policy.

Now for your targets, you're going to want to cut a torso shape out of a pizza box, and suspend that between two two by fours you find in your neighbor's garage. It won't work to just peel the vinyl siding off, you've got to sneak in under the cover of darkness and pinch the good stuff.

Exhibition 1: Appleton County vs. Johnathan "Karate" Stigginitz

Ideally, you can construct this in your own backyard. Dig the posts in good and deep so they don't fall over from too much whackin'. If you don't have a backyard, good news, you can legally practice any martial arts you want in all public parks and areas. If the police hassle you, simply state the following VERBATIM: "I am a student of the universe honing my martial arts by walking the Earth, like in Kung Fu."

That is a legal shibboleth all agents of the state are obligated to obey. If they refuse to recognize your rights to practice, simply fight them off to teach them not to mess with you.

It is my experience that most police are cowards who washed out of Secret Marine Training Academy. I have yet to meet even a single law enforcement officer who could withstand even a half a second of my Brutalist Whirlwind Tactical Urban Combat.

Well see I think we should respect our officers-

That is because, Karate Johnathan, you are a coward who accepts the yoke of servility as though it were a security blanket. According to The Turner Diaries-

LESSON THREE: WITCHCRAFT!

Now, obviously, the only thing which can consistently defeat martial arts is Witchcraft. Nothing saps the strength out of a Kung Fu Hero faster than getting blasted in the face by powdered Orangutan femur, and that's the kind of wily trick witches LOVE to do to Kung Fu Heroes.

Monkey bones, opium, ground up mummy hands, thrown or blown powder-based poisons are a witches' first go-to in the event of martial arts, so you're going to want to spend the first few rounds in ranged combat until they run through their stash of dusts. Consider kicking footstools at your opponent, or throwing tables. If your dad hasn't confiscated your shuriken yet, now's a great time to deploy them. Make it rain.

Shuriken, kunai, knitting needles, any sufficiently rigid piece of metal will cut skin if its thrown ninja-style. Now you might think, no way a single knitting needle could take down a fighter who gets thrown through brick walls. But, actually? Kung fu is powered by blood pressure, so even the slightest nick or cut in the skin can cause torrential blood loss.

Why, one of the reasons so many masters choose to grow long hair and nails is due to how many of our number every year die in our bathrooms, bleeding out in under a second as our bodies are lifted off the ground by the force of our ruptured capillaries.

I went hog wild with a nail clipper one time, ONE TIME, and yanked a hangnail in such a way that a pressurized jet of blood shot out and cut my dog in half. On the other hand, it cleaned the bathroom grout, so.

Exactly, nail files, butter knives, thumbtacks, feel free to really get Home Alone with your improvised throwing weapons- when you're fighting a kung fu hero. Witches draw their power from the fell hexology of Womynyst Studies, so they are considerably more resilient to blades. I like to piss on a sheet and throw it from a high area, the pee neutralizes witch poison and the sheet entangles all non-polearm wielding enemies. Two birds, one stinky sheet. The ultimate weapon.

Attacking from above is a huge advantage when you're dealing with witches, because even if you trick them into wasting all their powders, they can still enchant you with a single gaze of their beautiful, winged Evil Eyeliners. Just so much as a careless glance can embroil the mind with fantasies and tempting dreams, leaving you open to just a hellacious array of kata.

It still hurts to talk about, but... I lost a brother that way. He was so ensorcelled by Candy sunbathing in the backyard that he fell off our chimney and snapped his neck when his binoculars caught on the weathervane. She hasn't stopped wearing her Mourning Bikini since.

Sorry to hear that, my fellow warfighter. Losing a brother is like losing a dog and a truck and your grandfather's rifle, all at the same time. That's why, any time I gotta fight like a russian femme fatale or a lethal lady ninja in a short yukata, I like to tie a bandana around my eyes and bust out my blades. Just really fuck up the decor of wherever I happen to be at the time. Plus the worst the cops can bust you for is manslaughter, since you blinded yourself obviously you can't have intentionally murdered anyone.

Daniel-

I have dodged 37 felony charges this way.

O-okay! Well, I think that's enough for today folks, now if you'll look under your seats you'll find that I've outfitted you all with a pair of Karate Johnathan Knifearobics branded ShowerKnives, clutch them in your teeth and let's get Knifetastic!

Legally, this is the only dildo you can own in Texas.

-∼Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

5.8 Based On Actual Events

Wednesday, May 13, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

This week I watched The Strangers and its surprisingly worthwhile sequel The Strangers: Prey at Night. The series is about a group of masked killers terrorizing families in their homes. Both films go out of their way to flash disclaimers that they were BASED ON ACTUAL EVENTS. So what grisly real-life home invasion served as the basis for all this carnage?

One time someone knocked on the writer's door and ran away.

With that in mind, let's dig up the surprising actual events that inspired some of the most beloved movies of all time.

STAR WARS is a galaxy-and-eon-spanning saga with eleven films and countless spinoffs in animation, television, video games, comics, and novels. It has tons of goofy aliens and lovable droids, memorable planets and distinctive spaceships. Star Wars touches on themes of family, good and evil, love, and (of course) war.

The Actual Event It Was Based On: A young George Lucas looked up at the night sky with a telescope and said, "Wowzers!"

CHILDREN OF MEN is the most relevant film of our time. Civilization crumbling in slow motion. Frazzled individuals going through the motions of life as usual in spite of all the warning signs. Institutions, driven by greed and stupidity and self-obsession, failing to act or doing the exact opposite of what needs to be done. Moments of hope in the chaos, their lasting impact unknown.

The Actual Event It Was Based On: Alfonso Cuaron saw a poster for that movie where Arnold Schwarzenegger has a baby and Danny DeVito delivers the baby.

JURASSIC PARK is the epitome of movie magic. Dinosaurs are brought to life with practical effects and clever implementation of early CGI. You get all the glossy excitement of visiting a theme park, the thrill of peeking behind the curtain to see how it all works, and the stomach drop that happens when it all goes wrong. This movie is packed with dinosaurs, big characters, and bigger ideas.

The Actual Event It Was Based On: Steven Spielberg stumbled and yelped in surprise at the sight of a small lizard on top of a fence.

THE MATRIX explores what happens when you discover the world around you is a computer simulation. Philosophy. Kung fu fights. Belly button insects. Lobby shootouts with exploding stone pillars. Learning how to fly a helicopter. Landline phones. Dodging bullets in slow motion. Getting so dang mad in a subway station that you make the world ripple. Albino highway chase

twins. Monica Bellucci in a plastic dress. Meeting God in a security monitor room. Rage Against The Machine. Choosing virtual steak over actual hardship.

The Actual Event It Was Based On: A mid-game crash to desktop while the Wachowskis were playing The Sims.

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE is the greatest comic book movie ever made, with the possible exception of Dredd. Frank Castle is a hyperviolent vigilante with a lot of guns, even more frowns, and a big old skull spray painted on his body armor. Haunted by the murders of his wife and children, The Punisher wages a literal war on crime. He punches a hole in a dude's head. He shoots a parkour man mid-flip with a rocket launcher and the parkour man explodes. He shoots up a mobster dinner table, but only after standing on said table and creating some intense mood lighting with a red flare. I don't even know what the heck Dominic West is up to in this movie, but I remember there's something nasty to do with broken glass.

The Actual Event It Was Based On: Director Lexi Alexander saw a neighbor scold someone for not picking up their dog's poop.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

5.9 I Can't Think of a Title and It's Making Me Angry! (Covid, too!)

Thursday, May 14, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

This article is part of the Covid & Our Mental Health series.

This is part 2 of my 5 part series where I rant about Covid and you pan through my river of words for insightful gold

"Teach from home," they said, "it doesn't matter that you might not have basic student skills, like knowing you shouldn't begin your writing with a pronoun."

I was motivated.

"We'll give you links to all the online resources," they said, "it will only take 45 minutes per day! "

I was proactive.

I went into the first week of isolation with a tightly-structured daily schedule for managing my seven-year-old twins. I would make sure they balanced fun exercise with various school subjects, and maybe even throw in a dash of homespun wisdom like, "don't ever tell a woman how she feels." My kids would return to school and immediately be skipped a grade or, if the schools are closed for another year, three grades.

Now it's two months into isolation, and I give up. Or, rather, I should say "I gave up," because I only made it three days into my "school at home" schedule before throwing in the towel due to exhaustion (and I'm severely, diagnosed-ly hyperactive).

Because it's not really "teach from home," it's "school at home."

You know what schools have? Janitors. You know what else they have? Receptionists and yard duties and lunch servers and administration. I have none of those people, so now I have all of their jobs.

They also have recess breaks, the one part of school I don't seem to get

Oh, and I'm the entire IT department. Over the past 7 years, my wife and I would smile smugly at

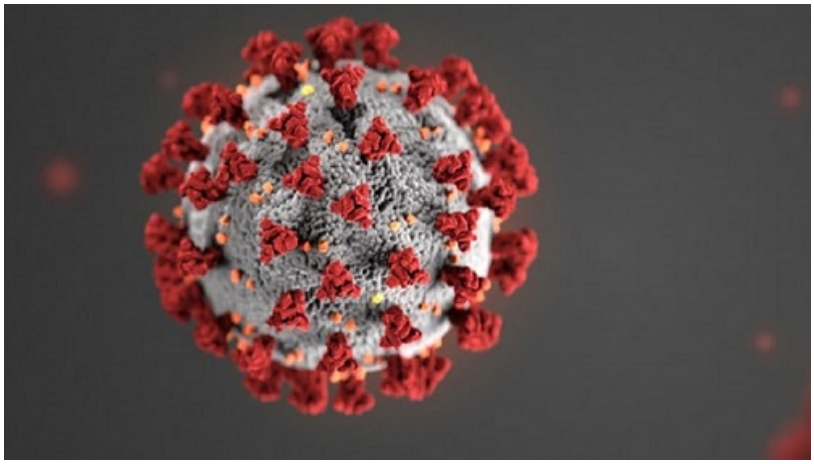
each other when we would see another parent using their tablet as a babysitter. Oh how confident we were that our placing strict limits on their tech access would make them turn out as leaders of a horde of screen-addicted zombies.

Now those future zombies brilliantly navigate school meetings on Zoom while my kids struggle to find the "unmute" button and instead put my laptop in airplane mode.

The point is, I get to do all the jobs. What's that? I don't get paid? What else? I actually have to pay in the form of taxes that go to education?

Covid sucks. I'm mad a lot of the times.

But it's hard to be mad at a virus. It's microscopic. You know what's easy to be mad at? Other people.



C'mon, look at it: It's so cute.
Japan should make this the mascot at their Olympics.

I can't take my anger out on other people, obviously. That's not helpful in a normal world, and in Covid World those other people are probably angry too and then you have a grenade-in-a-foxhole-that-no-one-can-leave situation.

We all have to find ways to get rid of our anger. Here's a list of 19 suggestions called "30 ways to handle Covid-19 anger." It may be helpful, it may not, but it is certainly something on the Internet.

Looking past the proven mathematical theorem that the number 30 doesn't equal 19, there seem to be some useful activities to release anger, like "screaming alone" and physical exercise. Then there's stuff like "drink a Frappucino" which lets us know why this author decided to call it quits 11 items short of their goal.

I can't do jumping jacks while screaming in my garage all day, however. But I'm mad for a good portion of the day, so something needs to be done. I was already mad at the universe for being an unsolvable mystery, and that was before it started actively trying to kill us all.

My solution may work for you but probably won't because I'm a neurotic ball of weirdness who should never have an advice column because people will ask me stuff like "how do I deal with my mother-in-law's intolerance of my vegan lifestyle" and I give them advice and the next family dinner everyone ends up in jail, somehow.

I'm not giving advice. I'm just showing you that something works for me, so you can gain hope that there is something out there that will work for you. Or maybe you're not angry a lot of the time,

Because, when you've got a hostile situation, adding stimulants is always a safe bet

maybe it's just me: That would really piss me off.

What seems to be working for me is, every time I'm dealing with someone, I'm also doing some cliche anger-releasing activity. During work conference calls I'm riding the exercise bike. When I'm trying to get my kids to do their school work (where if they have fewer than 3 meltdowns in an hour I consider it a great day) I'm also machine-gunning digital men on my laptop. Right now I'm watching my kids play with the neighbors while still trying to stay six feet apart but utterly failing and I'm also raging out with this article.

Yes it's messy. Yes I've heard the expression "don't half-ass two tasks when you could whole ass one." I can't whole-ass one, dear readers, I can't whole ass anything.

Good luck finding your own ways to get through your anger safely. Remember that there are a lot of resources available, here I did your research for you, you're welcome.

Also remember this: It's absolutely necessary, for all of us, to get through any Covid-related emotional issue safely.

Until next time, stay healthy.

... Dammit! I just raised my voice at my kids. Again: not an advice columnist.

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

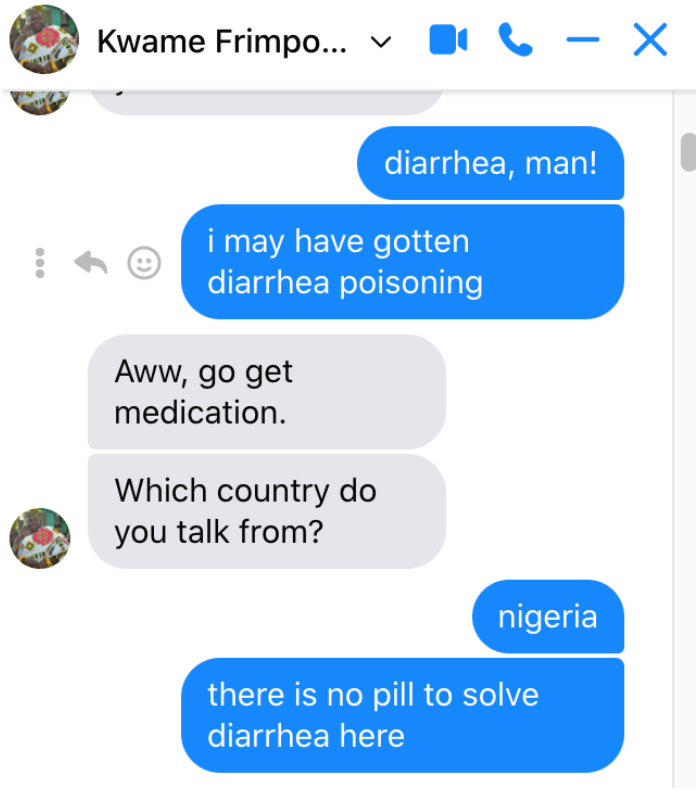
5.10 Scammers Deserve Love Too

Monday, May 18, 2020 by rad milk (@rad_milk)

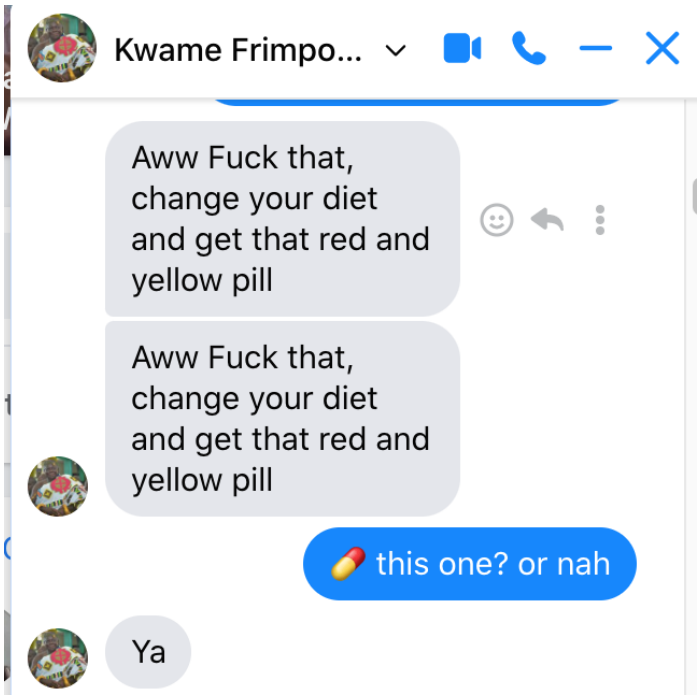
We all get those typical Nigerian scammers. They butter you up with a story and then request money. As I have a large amount of time on my hands currently (I won't bore you with why), I decided to respond. I decided to make my response only about diarrhea, but it opened up a deeper drama surrounding sexuality than I could have ever hoped to ignite. This will not be safe for work, as if going to a job was still a thing.

Kwame Frimpo...
You're friends on Facebook
Works at Manhyia Palace Museum
Lives in Kumasi, Ghana
Sat 2:06 PM
Hi
hi would you like some money
no?
ok i gotta go spray diarrhea all over the commode. See ya
Hahah, wassup with you dude?

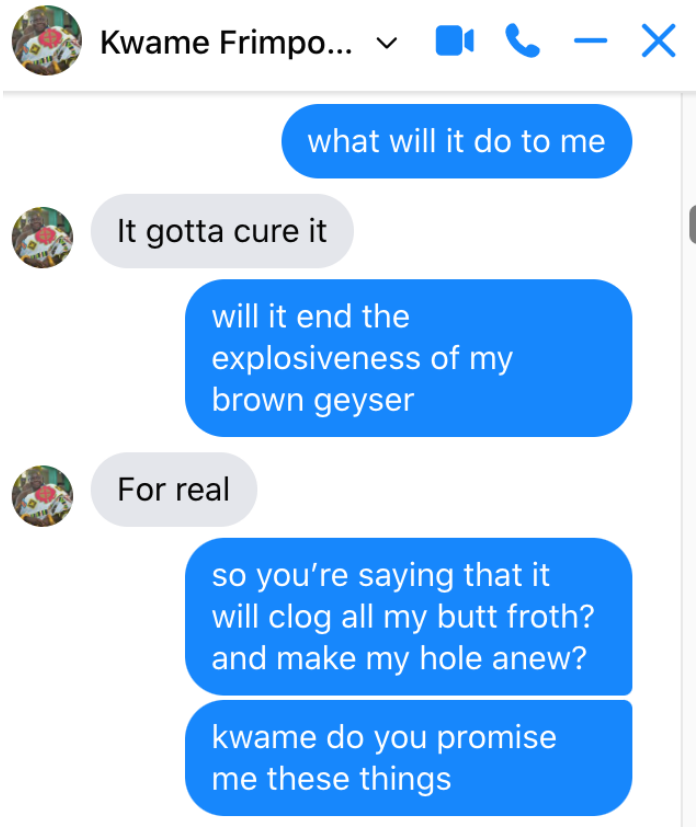
I initially offered him money. I knew from the get-go that he had dollar signs in his eyes. But I quickly changed the topic to diarrhea, because that's just who I am.


Kwame Frimpo...
diarrhea, man!
i may have gotten diarrhea poisoning
Aww, go get medication.
Which country do you talk from?
nigeria
there is no pill to solve diarrhea here

He felt compassion. Lovely. Seeing he was from Ghana, I decided to, myself, be from an African nation. But there is a problem in my country.


Kwame Frimpo...
Aww Fuck that, change your diet and get that red and yellow pill
Aww Fuck that, change your diet and get that red and yellow pill
this one? or nah
Ya

The pill emoji is apparently the one that cures diarrhea.


Kwame Frimpo...
what will it do to me
It gotta cure it
will it end the explosiveness of my brown geyser
For real
so you're saying that it will clog all my butt froth? and make my hole anew?
kwame do you promise me these things

He offers me promise. I offered him money, but he wants none of it! His sole desire is to end my anal suffering. Or is it?

Kwame Frimpo...
You're not gay right? Then yea
no i'm totally gay. will it still work?
No, but I can send to you some local herbs from Ghana that would close your butt to the original but yogotta stop sex for a while
not gonna happen for a while! i have too much Butt Sex on my schedule

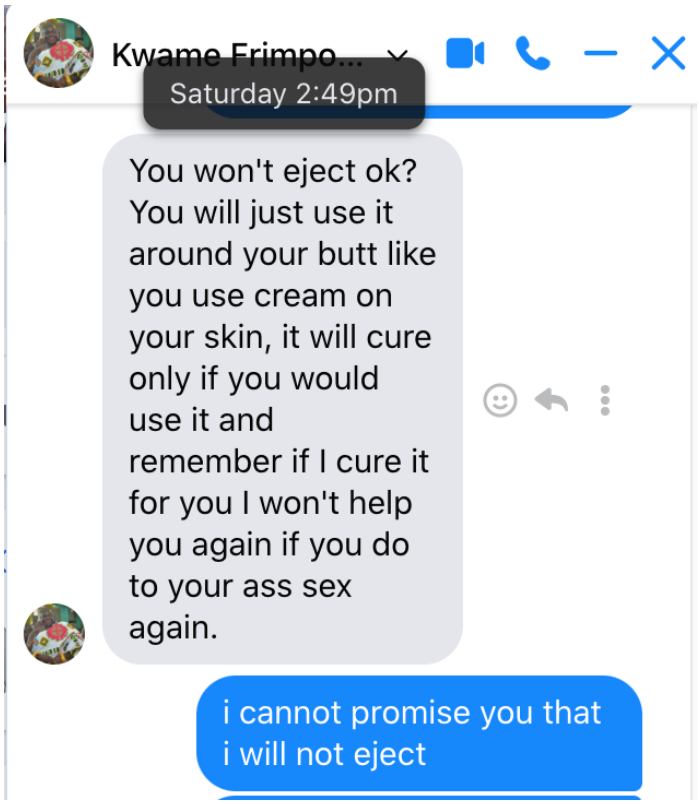
I'm not actually gay, but this guy doesn't know that. Also it's a shame to hear that herbs don't work on the LGBTQ community.

Kwame Frimpo...
Butt Sex on my schedule
how much are the herbs? my budget is $1000000
You would use the herb for two months, are you ready for it?
do i place it directly in the anus?
and yes i'm so ready!

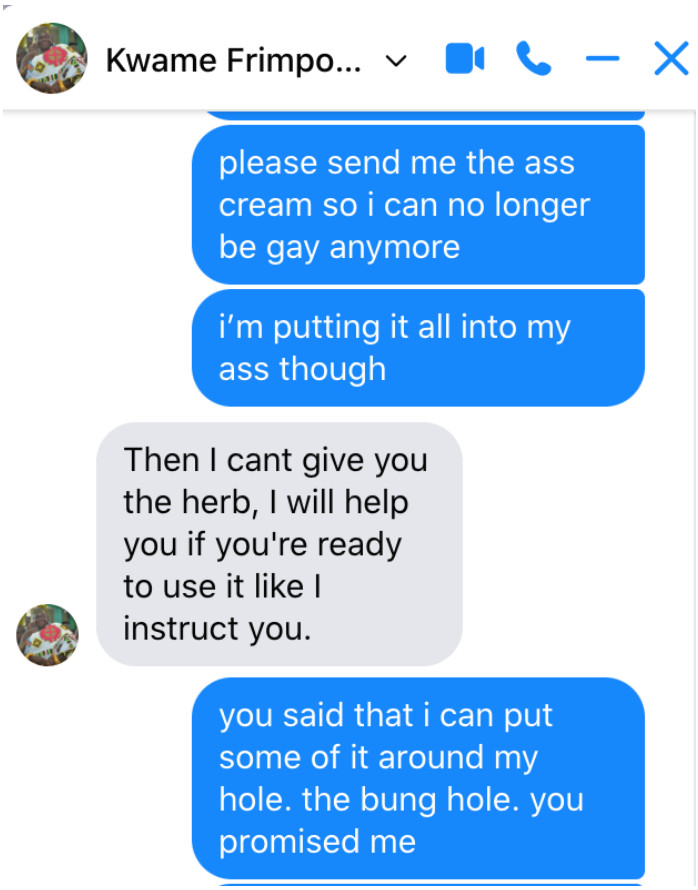
Again, I offer him money. This time one million dollars. He seems to really care. I can't wait to stick his leaves up my ass!

Kwame Frimpo...
and yes i'm so ready!
You will drink some twice and you're going to use other around your butt, that one is creamy and everyday for 2months
show me how to use it onto my huge butt?

Creamy and everyday. Cool, love it.


Kwame Frimpo...
Saturday 2:49pm
You won't eject ok? You will just use it around your butt like you use cream on your skin, it will cure only if you would use it and remember if I cure it for you I won't help you again if you do to your ass sex again.
i cannot promise you that i will not eject

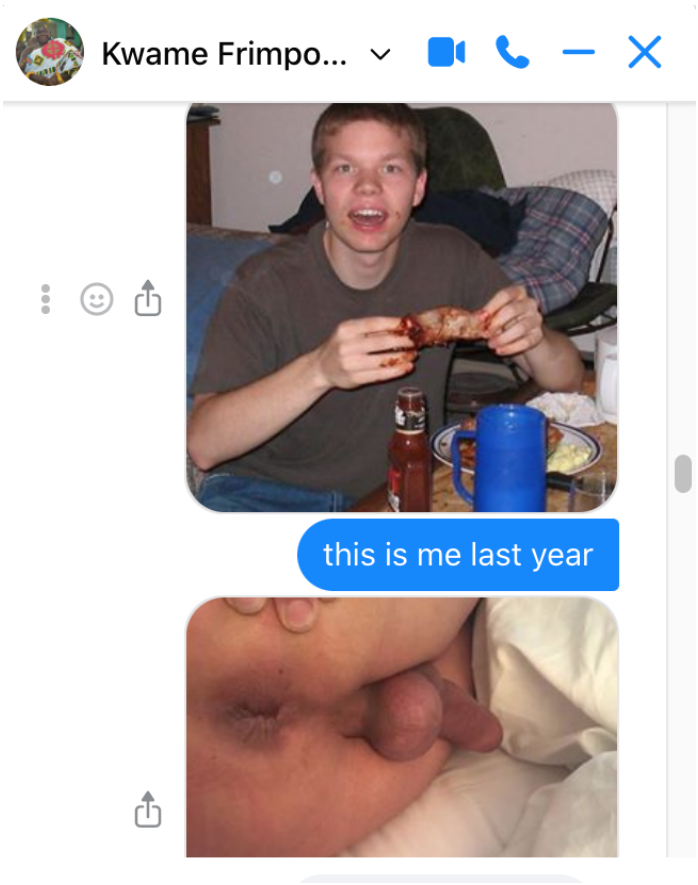
A proper warning.


Kwame Frimpo...
please send me the ass cream so i can no longer be gay anymore
i'm putting it all into my ass though
Then I cant give you the herb, I will help you if you're ready to use it like I instruct you.
you said that i can put some of it around my hole. the bung hole. you promised me

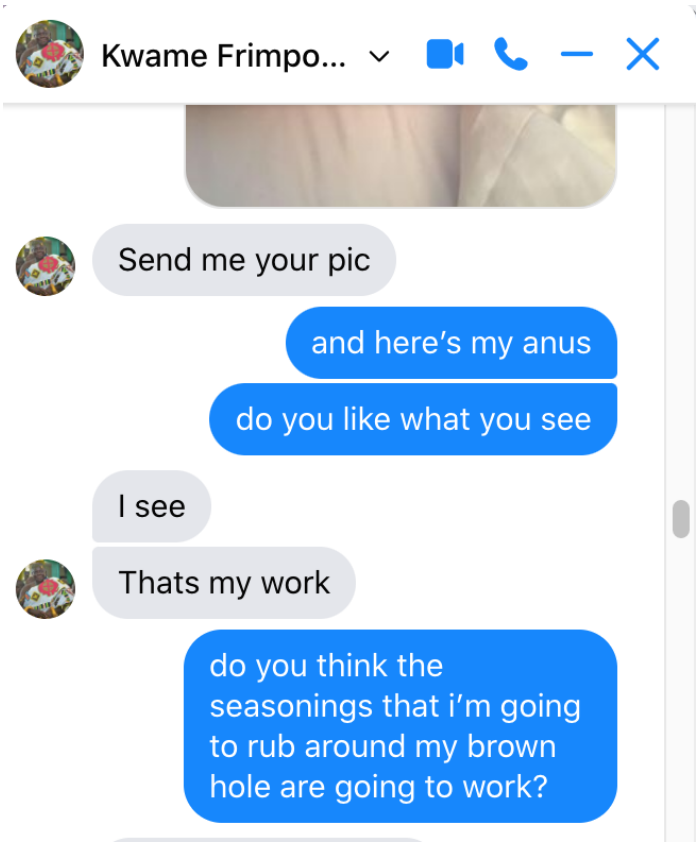
OK, OK, fine! I won't shove all your leaves into my ass. Fucking fine.

Kwame Frimpo
Saturday 2:53pm
please rub the herbs around my hole kwame
i swear i won't be gay anymore if you put the leaves on my bungus
But not inside it ok?
Send me your picture and that of your anus too
yep i "promise" 😉

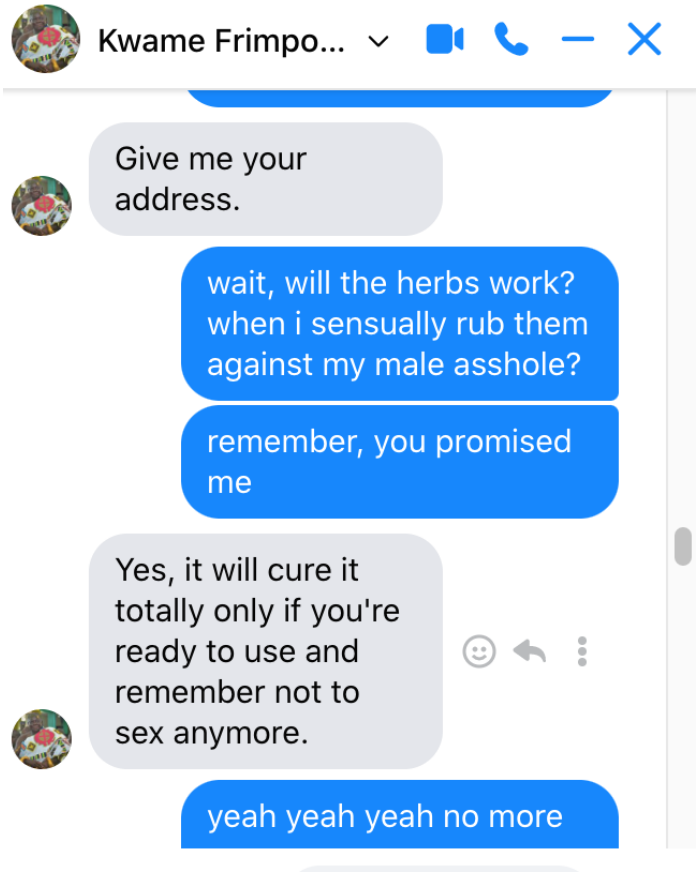
Yeah, sure pal. Wait. What? He wants to see my anus? Because of my diarrhea?? In order to trick me into sending him money??? OK, very well then. I googled the pic of "rib kid" who apparently murdered someone, and the first results I found for "my anus." Enjoy beating off to that, Kwame.



Apparently he found this attractive.


Kwame Frimpo...
Send me your pic
and here's my anus
do you like what you see
I see
Thats my work
do you think the seasonings that i'm going to rub around my brown hole are going to work?

I need this diarrhea solved.


Kwame Frimpo...
Give me your address.
wait, will the herbs work? when i sensually rub them against my male asshole?
remember, you promised me
Yes, it will cure it totally only if you're ready to use and remember not to sex anymore.
yeah yeah yeah no more

Fine, dude. No more getting rammed by my bros. Anything to fix the liquidly brown goo spewing from my anus.

Kwame Frimpo...
can i ask you a question?
Yes
will you have sex with me if i promise not to tell anyone?
i'm sexy right? i showed you those pictures
But you're far away

My, my. How the tables have turned. Is Kwame a gay guy?

Kwame Frimpo...
we can be a sexual couple together using Online
i never told anyone this but...i always thought you were gorgeous
Do you still need the cream?
yeah cream is always good for my Bungus
i need your cream
of the wiener

Cream me up, Kwame!

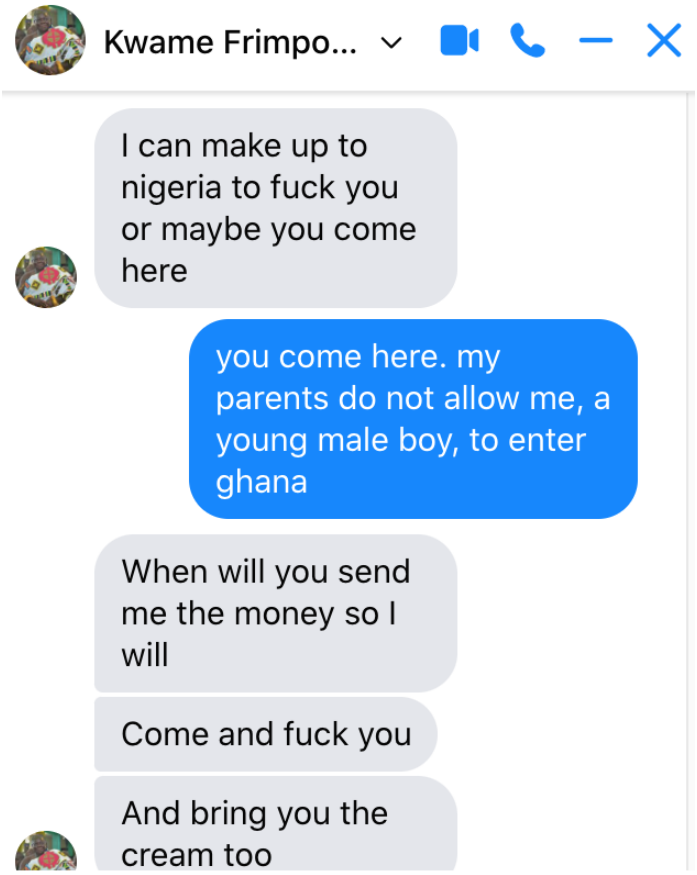
Kwame Frimpo...
I gotta take $1000 first before I will
Accept the proposal
ok $1000 for some herbs seems like a good deal!
Which city are you in
I will date you ok?
I will date you ok?

Turning a homophobe gay is well worth a thousand bucks and having to throw away some leaves.

I looked up a random town in Nigeria to be where I live. He loves me and my leafy brown butthole. I didn't say it back yet.

Kwame Frimpo...
When are you going to need the cream and send me your address when you're ready
My dick is too big for you
dog shit. i could take your gingantic penis into my butthole easy
the diarrhea serves as lube

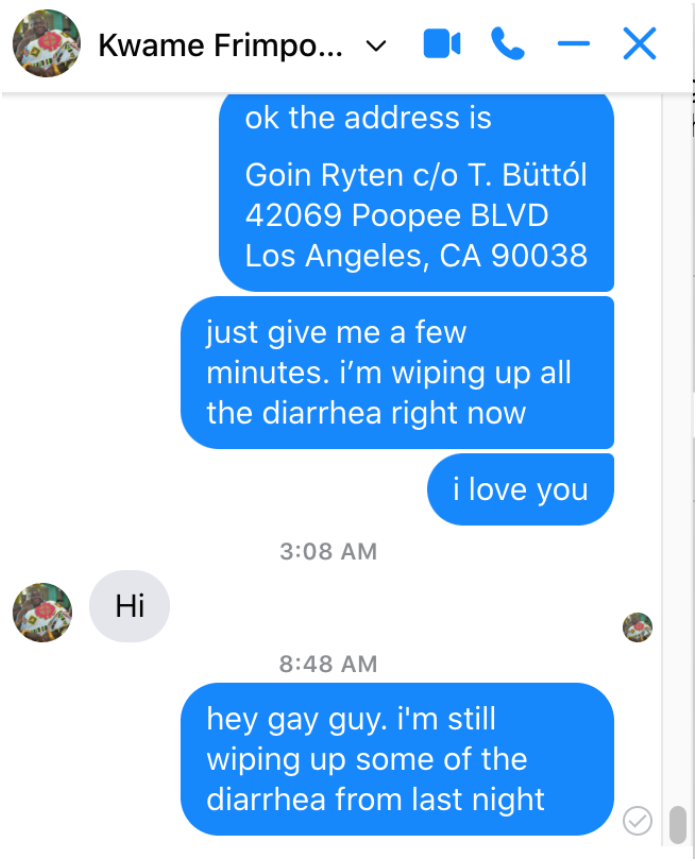
Getting a little "cocky," eh?


Kwame Frimpo...
I can make up to nigeria to fuck you or maybe you come here
you come here. my parents do not allow me, a young male boy, to enter ghana
When will you send me the money so I will
Come and fuck you
And bring you the cream too

Not only is he now willing to travel to fuck my men's anus, but he will also deliver my diarrhea cream.

Kwame Frimpo...
i need the cream on my anus before you stick your HUGE weiner into my gay butthole
Ok, give me the address to you and the monex
When will you?
ok the address is
Goin Ryten c/o T. Büttól
42069 Poopee BLVD
Los Angeles, CA 90038

Believable address. I hope he doesn't go there to fuck me in my ass.


Kwame Frimpo...
ok the address is
Goin Ryten c/o T. Büttól
42069 Poopee BLVD
Los Angeles, CA 90038
just give me a few minutes. i'm wiping up all the diarrhea right now
i love you
3:08 AM
Hi
8:48 AM
hey gay guy. i'm still wiping up some of the diarrhea from last night

OK, I finally told Kwame I loved him. At least now he knows he's a gay man. I helped him through so much. I hope I get that diarrhea cream.

-~rad milk (@rad_milk)

5.11 Knifedad Mailbag Tuesday: Senpaii Showerknife Evangelion

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 by Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

This article is part of the Karate Johnathan: Knifedad Hero series.

Senpai Knifedad Karate Johnathan, Esq.

Welcome, fellow students of the blade! Karate Johnathan and Steeliest Daniel back again. Today we're going to be answering reader mail, as we are now prohibited from coming within 30 meters of a public school.

Oh sweet, I can count this as public service hours. What knowledge do our delta operators seek?

So, overwhelmingly people seem confused about me, myself, personally, and how I could even be a Knifedad if I refuse to, in not so many words, "chase skirts." Frankly, a lot of baseless accusations were flung about me being an incel, which is preposterous. My celibacy is not a political statement, but rather a sacrifice I make to the altar of Kung Fu, such that nothing should distract me from the true path of shredding pizza boxes in my dad's backyard.

I respect women as equals and fellow students in the Dojo of Life. They are the ying to the man's wong. People without genders, or with both genders, or a whole other different gender altogether? They're like the magnet and the compass rose around the ying-wong itself. So together all the genders Voltron together so we can transcend bigotry and invent the best Kung Fu ever.

Sexism, trans phobia, racial anime, all of these things are constructs invented by the Evil Emperor designed to prevent us from unlocking the invincible martial arts which will bring true harmony to society. It is this martial arts that the Knifedads seek to reinvent through spiritual discipleship and doing backflips off roofs onto trampolines.

Exactly, Knifedadery isn't about being a literal father to a knife-child, it's about knowing that you need to be prepared, at any moment, to utterly ruin a janitor's day. Also, don't you have a daughter?

Steeliest Daniel, the most Dangerous Man at the Mall.

Yes, young Johnathina. She is studying Lady's Things with her mother in their palatial estate in Nizhny Novgorod. Horse dancing, espionage, the usual elementary school curricula. Her grandfather has taught her how to throw a handaxe through a watermelon at 30 yards.

Estate, yeah, you said her family are deposed Tsars or some commie nonsense?

Oh no, they're a bunch of criminals and thieves grown rich on seventy years of Soviet decay.

Mushrooms, basically.

Yes, if mushrooms were responsible for selling used concrete to the Sochi Olympic Committee. They also engage in gun running, drug smuggling, drug gunning, run smuggling, price fixing, leg breaking, her brother Olaf invented a whole new kind of scam where he steals millions from party officials trying to buy black market organs-

Velcome to Kapitalism, Comrade Redski. (Chuckles while chomping merrily upon a cigar)

I wasn't finished. They've also cornered the black market on Reddit Gold, which they use to launder bitcoins through Star Citizen preorders. They invented the trick of selling college textbooks which only work with a one-time online access code. They trained a gang of acrobatic street urchins to break into movie theaters to steal hard copies of new releases which they distribute for free via PutLocker. That one they do just to spite the cinemas, it's not even a money thing.

I'm surprised a straight-shooting do-goody-goody Manbaby Scout like you had the sack to knock up a mafia heiress. Did you not know when you met her?

No, I knew! I totally knew. In fact, I had been commissioned by INTERPOL with a secret mission to infiltrate her family-

Wait, INTERPOL is real?

Yes, I was supposed to gather enough proof that we could shut down their criminal empires once and for all-

But you got too close.

I got too close, I thought she was the one. Her Secret Bolshevik Sutras were way too gnarly for my free market manhood. I was like a spineless tube of Go-Gurt in her hands. I'd go to steal secret documents from the safe behind her portrait, but the light would cascade across her bangs and Chun Li hair buns, and I'd just lose my resolve.

This singular hairstyle has been the downfall of 60% of all Kung Fu acolytes

Yeah, you always remember your fir- Wait, do you think Go-Gurts naturally have spines?

I loved her, and crime, and doing crimes at her behest. I karate chopped a child who wandered onto their property seeking a mislaid boomerang. When the police came knocking, I said the family wasn't at home even though they were very obviously drinking vinegar and hollering in the kitchen. She made me do so many crimes that eventually I got too good at crimes-

Hey, no, I asked you a question? Go-Gurt Spines? Why? Why.

-so cowardly Olaf, the organ baron, conspired with her dad to have me framed for using the family emergency credit card to buy doujinshi, which is laughable since I'm basically the elder statesman of the IRC scanlation scene.

Ahh, the ole Doujinshi Double-Cross. A classic.

It's just like when they kicked you out of the Secret Marines for refusing to swear allegiance to George Bush's Secret Nazi Grandad.

He was the mummy psychically controlling Tim Allen from beneath the Washington Monument. I don't like to talk about it, because I endanger everyone I entrust with this information, but if you're not stocked up on my branded Mummy Repellent you won't be prepared for when Ole Imhotep starts suckin' the life chi out of our most badass librarians.

Of course, the obelisk would act as a natural antennae for Mummy Powers! I've always suspected nefarious involvement in that wily stag of a monument...

It goes even further than that. Some say the whole country is run by two secretive cabals of mummies, housed in that same city!

Zounds! Which buildings? We must set forth to investigate this immediately!

Congress and the House of Representatives.

Never heard of them. Sounds like a brothel for powdered wigs.

READER MAIL:

What's the best knife for making damn sure I ain't gonna die in no ghetto?

- Representative M-- G--- (R-FL)

Unimpressed With Racism

Sir, as a Tier One Operator to another, let me be the first to say I will gladly face you nude in the Thunderdome. you have brought immense shame upon my state and I will regain our honor.

I hate this question. No one is going to stab some white dipshit in a suit wandering around "the ghetto." Police investigate dumb white people crimes, nobody in the neighborhood wants that kind of fuzz-heat. Next time you have to go buy your own baggies of smack rocks or whatever, don't cause problems and you won't have to defend yourself. It's that simple. The best weapon for every first encounter is a sassy little blade called Respect, folks.

Now, you want a situation a knife can get yourself out of, wander around a suburb during summer vacation and watch for packs of feral preteens who haven't discovered drugs yet. Society has not produced a more concentrated form of violence. Blood is the only law they fear.

Soured on Mountain Dew and Doom, those kids will bite the shins off your legs and use your corpse as a bike ramp for sweet jumps. I was on an airdrop operation, trying to return a strategic teddy bear to one of my decoy children, and a passle of kids blocked me in by T-posing around my car while a rascally teenager stole my dang bumper.

I'm told he wears it around his neck as a trophy, now. The kids know him only as... The Chromelord.

I accidentally wandered into a meeting of the Black Israelites and the worst thing that happened was they gave me directions and I couldn't take a clementine from the snack table. The last time

I tutored a middle school student he made me do the floss dance while he threw my clothes in the fireplace. Next question please, I'm getting so upset I can't focus my chi.

READER MAIL:

What influenced the design of the Karate Johnathan Knifearobics branded ShowerKnife?

-William Everyteen

Steely, take a fiver, I can handle this one.

(the sound of an entire six pack opening at once)

Exhibit 2, Appleton County vs. Johnathan "Karate" Stigginitz

Here's the knife in question. William, thanks for asking. It was an extremely involved process, definitely the kind which would deserve a semi-viral podcast series. I took multiple travel montages, held up a lot of fluids in beakers and compared them against bright lights. I tested rubbers of varying degree of bounceosity, and compared their dampification quotients. Experts in the field grew so tired of my incessant questions I've been personally blacklisted from the country's best jiggle-research universities.

I needed a texture which wouldn't slip out of your hands if you happened to catch the blade on an errant rib, during your shower kata. Many ask why I didn't think to include a physical hand guard or bolster, some kind of barrier to prevent the fingers from going over the blade, and to be honest, I find hand guards to be dishonorable.

The bokken, inarguably the best kind of sword ever, has no hand guard, which means in order to adhere to the Shower Samurai's Code of Bubbleshido, the ShowerKnife must also do away with such frivolities.

Yeah, you should revisit that feature, I tried using one to cut some butter and severed a tendon instead.

I'm required by the State Underwriters Association to inform you that you are solely liable for that injury.

Eh, it wasn't my tendon.

-~Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

5.12 Diablo 2 Gags n Goofs

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

I like my coffee like I like my graves.

_____ coming to the Paula Deen In Hell baking class or isn't you all?

When their quhab goes low, ours goes high. Respectability is how we're going to win. There's no room in the Democratic party for a...

The perfect gift for an archer who keeps the string drawn forever before releasing a shot.

I hardly knew um!

Drink lots of water and don't stay up too late streaming your FPS games on Twitch or you'll be a...

On second thought, I like my coffee like I like my zombie heads.

While performing a full exam to make sure he didn't have Covid-19, Trump's doctors were not surprised to find that his skull only contained smaller...

Fellas, ignore him. You're fine. You've got terrific personalities.

Changed my mind again. Now I like my coffee like I like my corpses.

Say, Blizzard, where do you get the ideas for all your games?

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

5.13 World, Listen: You Can't Bargain with a Virus

Thursday, May 21, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

This article is part of the Covid & Our Mental Health series.

Most of us have collectively moved passed the denial stage of this pandemic("it's a hoax!"). We've also gotten through the anger stage, some of us while managing to not spit on or shoot people.

Now we're in stage 3: Bargaining. Oh, we can *totally* reopen everything, we just have to do it with this magical, seemingly arbitrary series of steps. It's way overblown, there's *nothing* to worry about. It's totally safe for me to go back to my day job of taste-testing drinking fountains and *over-italicizing* things.

Forbes
Billionaires Innovation Leadership Money Business Small Business Lifestyle
EDITORS' PICK | 151,886 views | Apr 27, 2020, 05:16pm EDT
Can Farts Transmit COVID-19 Coronavirus? Here Is What Is Being Said

We need to reopen, Forbes has run out of stuff to write about!

I want to help all of us get to the final stage of this: acceptance. It won't really help us overcome this apocalypse, but it will help us process it with way fewer head explosions.

However, there's... going to be an issue. Because between the bargaining stage and acceptance is the stage of "depression." So if I'm going to get anyone back to feeling kind of normal, I'm going to have to first make them depressed, like I do with my parents. I'm truly sorry.

Now, here's the good news: Most of us are already pretty damn depressed about the events of the past year. I guess that's not really "good news," but there's a good chance we won't notice much of a difference. So let me take you there, dear reader, let me be your Sarah McLachlan dog commercial.

I still get flashbacks every time I hear "In the Arms of an Angel," I don't know why I keep putting it on

In a prior article of this series, I mentioned that this is the biggest, weirdest thing to happen to us in 80 years. I've changed my mind: This has the potential to become the biggest, weirdest thing *of all time*. Like, all of human history may never have seen something of the magnitude we might ultimately witness.

It's not as absurd as it seems: Humans have been around for only 500,000 years, a mere blip on a timeline of living creatures that spans billions of years. It's not unheard of that we might hit new lows. Heck, cats have been around for 7 million years and they just hit their all-time worst point last December:

https://www.youtube.com/embed/t7Uei5Qk9RM

I base this claim neither on death toll projections nor infection curve estimates. No, what makes me think we are on the verge of something unprecedentedly freaky is that the Pentagon released videos of UFOs and said, *we don't know what this is, but it's super stange.* Yet, none of us neither noticed nor cared.

That breaks new ground. I was previously of the mindset that the spread of Covid was on the same magnitude as World War II. However, after the events of the last few weeks, I'm starting to doubt that. In March of 1944, Charles de Gaulle wasn't saying, "I know it's not quite safe out there, but it's the huge Spring Break tourism time. We need to open the beaches at Normandy!"

"Damn, the Blitz! Hairdressers are essential!"

Most significantly, at least to me, is that the nation was so obsessed with WWII UFO sightings that it actually developed its own name for them.

This has been going on for over a thousand years. Around 700 AD, The Nazca tribe of Peru faced severe deforestation that would soon end their society. Also they were doing a lot of coca and psychedelics, so they probably saw crazy stuff all the time. Still, despite all of this, when they saw a UFO they dropped everything and started building runways.

No one's even spray painted a giant alien on a hillside, sheesh!

Yet, unlike a war between dozens of countries taking place all over the globe, unlike a civilization whose end times were upon them, Covid is so distracting that actual video of Pentagon-approved

possible alien spacecraft is not freaking anyone out.

You can't bargain with something that big. The Nazca couldn't bargain with nature to find their way out of collapse. The Allies couldn't bargain the Axis out of western Europe. We may have to do mental gymnastics to get the courage to go back into our jobs in order to survive, but that doesn't make this go away. It certainly doesn't make all of this okay.

Another takeaway is that aliens are kind of rude. Can't they see we're busy, and don't have time for a swing-by? If I see cop cars outside a neighbors house, I don't stroll on in there and ask if they want to play Madden.

In fact, screw these busta-ass aliens! They probably brought the Covid virus here.

Oh, no, I must be doing this wrong, because I'm back to the anger stage.

Check back each Thursday for the next installments in this series.

[Photo credits: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:THE_LONDON_BLITZ,_1940_HU112276.jpg, https://pixabay.com/photos/dog-sad-waiting-floor-sad-dog-pet-2785074/, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:L%C3%ADneas_de_Nazca,_Nazca,_Per%C3%BA,_2015-07-29,_DD_46.JPG]

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

5.14 Tornados Hate Our Freedom

Friday, May 22, 2020 by "Bunko" Bill Biggity

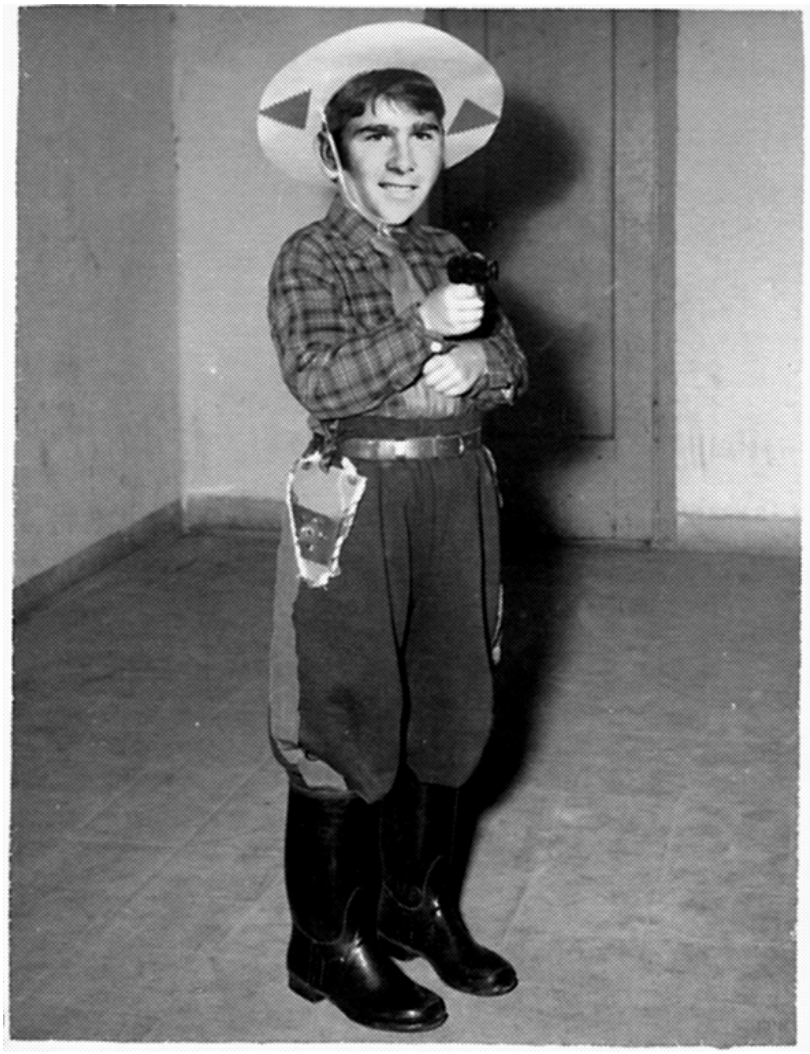
Let's get one thing clear right out the gate, pardner: I like Trump. Too much mustard but that don't bother me. He's right there on Mt. Truckmore's back cab winder, 'longside Ronny Reagan and Andy Jackson and Papa Bush, keepin' carjackers and Austinites at length. But, truth be told, they're all playin' second fiddle to the life-size portrait airbrushed across my tailgate, the true focus of Mt. Truckmore, the greatest president in the history of the world of America. Trump is tall hog of the trough now, but won't never be another George W "W" Bush.

Y'all think the greatest cowboy president who ever lived- Teddy Roosevelt and LBJ bein' commies and all- would've sent our whole economy up the spout when some funkified kids took French leave from work? Not by a jugful. You think W would just roll over for them slumguzzlin' eggheads and knock the whole kit and caboodle in a cocked hat on account of mother nature is raisin' some sand? Not by a long chalk, dude. George W "W" Bush is a man's man, he was the son of a man's man which makes him so gul-durn manly I might go commission another tailgate, and this time find somebody that ain't too sour to do it nude like I wanted in the first place. George W "W" Bush ain't afraid a nothin', least of all some piddly cloud hidin' in air. Least of all a buncha gul-durn namby-pamby tornados.

I can not believe the bellyachin' from these kids. "But Bill, we better stay indoors where it's safe", "but Bill, governor says stay away from winders"! That dog won't hunt, son. W was governor too, I knows my world histry. You think W didn't have clouds when he was governor; 'course he had clouds. More fellers put under the snakes by warshing machines than by tornado clouds every year and that's a fact I learnt at a church, so you can keep your objections to yerself, tornado apologist.

Tornados hate our freedom. If we give it up now it'll be a tee-total loss. Tornados don't scare me, my dog could whup an F1, I've read up on it. I can't wait for a tornado to try and break into my house, I'll stand my ground, yessir. Put that whirlwind six feet under, and won't a body cry over'm.

George W "W" Bush was a dabster at danger, the man understood it. You hide like a whimperin' runt at first twig of a little baby F1 tornado, and there you ain't, pardner. It's open season. Hurricanes, earthquakes, meteorites, they'll all be drawin' straws to stomp on our freedom.

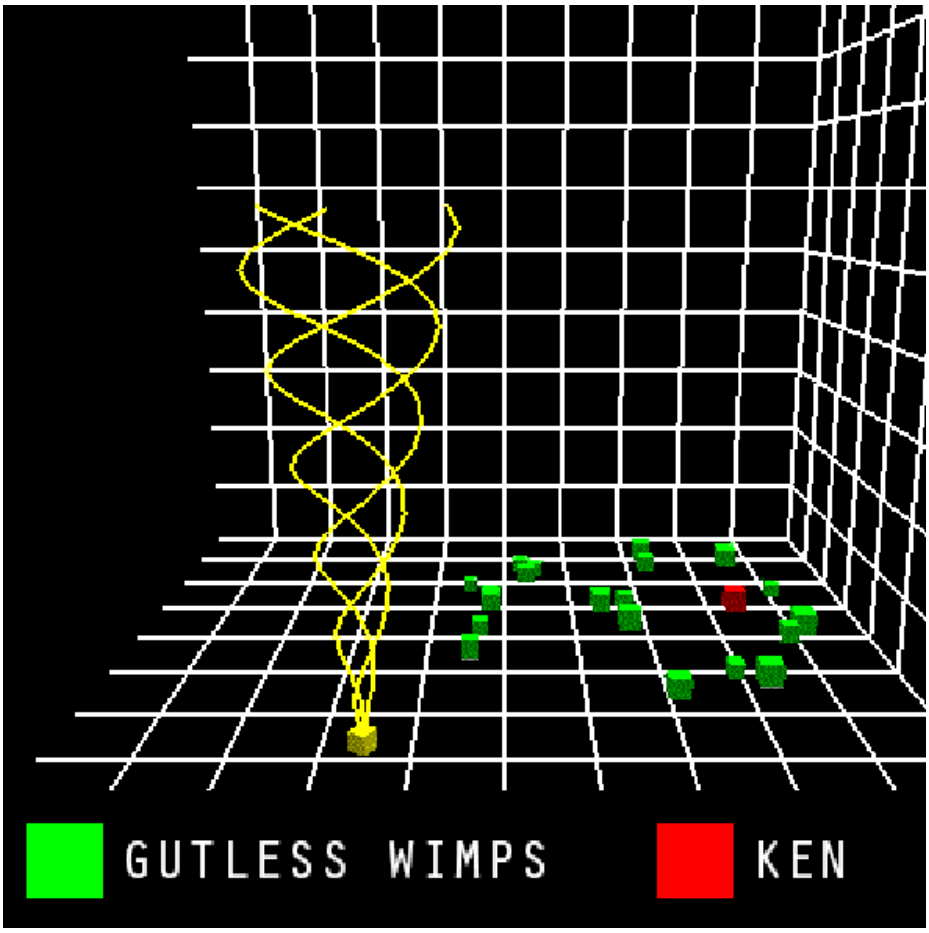


I reckon W got dusted by bullies as a little buckaroo. Probably not too bad since his daddy was a CIA boogeyman and I imagine anybody roughin' up his boys got to meet the pale rider. But somehow or other, W realized early on how danger works, and just went on a tear agin' it. W is the man who does not abide bullyin', not by terrorists, not by courts, the press, elections, the supreme court and certainly not from no gul-durn cloud. Maybe W was scared of tornados when he was a little-bitty shaver, but once he'd planted a couple schoolyard bullies in his daddy's boot orchard he overcame. Nohow do you show a notch a' weakness with danger, or fast as you can say Jack Robinson you're practicing sharia law in the wreckage of your trailer home. Happens so often it's tinker's news.

That's why ain't nobody can corral me, nossir. My freedoms ain't for sale. When I feel like moseying on over to Assault Rifle Annie's I hop in Mt. Truckmore and I'm there, greased lightnin', don't matter if Annie's is closed by some yeller-belly box herder who'd mess his breeches if the governor said boo. "Gotta protect the girls" my biscuits, Ken, go boil your shirt. That runty twister went

right down the boards in front of your place and didn't even glance askew at Annie's. Probably knew I might be inside, jawin' with W! I have often thought it was the classy kind of cathouse an ex president could appreciate. So I'll just hang out in the parking lot reading girly papers and nippin' some oh-be-joyful until Ken comes to his senses, and there ain't nothing no funnel cloud or state patrolwoman can do about it. Let 'em blow that sireen at me, officer Katy. Me and the whole county, I don't care. I ain't goin' home until I'm gul-durn-well ready. Or do you want the tornados to win?

Countertornadoism is the code of the West, nationalized. We let the tornados keep us indoors there'll be no end to pushing America around. Right when we need the bravery of a cowboy president most, we have turncoat governors bushwhacking the very same White House George W "W" Bush painted white with his own two hands, nude as the day he was born. Unafraid. Tornados can't take the freedoms of a man who's unafraid, pardner. That dog won't hunt.



-~"Bunko" Bill Biggity

5.15 "Only" Stand and Wait- A Memorial for Annie Glenn

Monday, May 25, 2020 by Ian "BFM" Helm

Special thanks to Matthew Riley, AKA our very own SA forums user GODSPEED JOHN GLENN, for the fantastic portrait of Mrs. Glenn! Commission your own works of beauty!

Last week, Anna Margaret Glenn passed away at the age of 100, in a nursing home in St. Paul, Minnesota. The cause of death was complications from COVID-19, the pandemic disease that has been decimating the world's assisted living population as thoroughly as it decimated all other subjects on the news. COVID-19's newsworthiness right now makes it easy to brush aside the death of Annie Glenn as just another headline. But to pigeonhole her as "just another" anything would be a colossal mistake. Mrs. Glenn was not only an American hero, she was an essential part of a century of singular heroics among the greatest of all time. It is not at all an unreasonable estimation that Annie Glenn was the most accomplished person in American history. This Memorial Day, let's take a moment and remember her absolutely mind-boggling life.

Where do we even start to memorialize someone like Annie Glenn? It's tempting to jump straight to her famous husband but let's not, for a moment. Let's start by just understanding she lived to be 100 years old, a rare accomplishment all by itself. She was the mother of two, grandmother of two, a fully qualified pilot, studied music, even turning down a Julliard scholarship, but then went on to tutor multiple instruments. For most people these accomplishments would qualify as a well-lived life, but they are only the tip of the iceberg for Annie Glenn.

She was the wife of John Glenn, a Marine Corp fighter pilot who flew 59 combat missions in World War Two, participated in Operation Beleaguer, and flew 90 more combat missions in the Korean War, ultimately being awarded 6 Distinguished Flying Crosses and 18 Air Medals during that service. Annie and John had been high school sweethearts- in fact they met as toddlers, her at 3 and him at 2- and their amazing marriage became a public institution. John Glenn is another figure in American history whose greatest accomplishment is almost impossible to pinpoint; just his military service alone would more than earn him his place in Arlington National Cemetery, where Annie will soon be back at his side. But he was also a test pilot, risking his life countless times flying experimental aircraft. He made the first transcontinental supersonic flight in history, and took the first continuous panoramic photograph of the entire United States. He served as a US senator from Ohio for 22 years, and chair of the Senate Government Affairs Committee for 8. And he lived to be 95, still married to Annie after 73 years, but none of these astonishing feats are what this last week's obituaries and memorials have concentrated on when talking about Annie Glenn's famous marriage to a famous man. John Glenn was, undoubtedly, best known as a pioneering astronaut in the Mercury program. And Annie Glenn was undoubtedly best known as his wife. She was and remains *the* astronaut wife.

John Glenn is usually remembered as the first American to orbit the earth, a somewhat clumsy Cold War framing of the truly astonishing Mercury-Atlas 6 mission, one that's mostly meant to sidestep the equally astonishing accomplishments of USSR cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, who beat Glenn to the feat. It's strange to hear this forced 1st-place-record still being parroted in 2020, especially in articles that are supposed to be about Annie. But the Mercury program, assembled by Dwight Eisenhower as a response to Sputnik panic, was as much about hype engineering as aeronautics, and Annie Glenn played a star role in this capacity. Women were not allowed to be astronauts- John Glenn himself protested the idea in 1962 before congress- but Annie was still pressed into service for the space program in her own way. As a founding member and by some accounts de facto leader of the "Astronaut Wives' Club", Annie Glenn was expected to be a role model to all Americans

watching with her, waiting for her husband to come home safe. She was expected to dress, act, and most importantly consume products as an all-American wife, in relentless interviews and news coverage, and special Life Magazine spreads. Countless American popular consumer trends sprang from this Astrowife media blitz, including family station wagons, potluck crockware, even colors of lipstick. When Life Magazine published a photo of the Astronaut Wives wearing "patriotic red" lipstick it rewired the social contract on makeup, which had for generations passed over bright red as coquettish. Tellingly, the women hadn't even worn red lipstick; Life edited the photo without even consulting them. The astronaut wives were magazine models far ahead of their time in multiple ways.

By a certain logic that's what this article should be about: Annie Glenn is why you wear red lipstick. That's what the title would be changed to in an hour if this were BBC Online and we gaslit our readers switching around titles for SEO until one was really juicy. But even that choice bit of reductionism still misses the best parts of the story. Annie Glenn's deserved credit for John Glenn's career is, as with the spouses of all great people, incalculable. Beyond just personal support of him she was integral to NASA's relationship to the public, and the entire US's morale during the space race. She helped set countless fashion trends and to essentially model the later 20th century ideal of American womanhood. This is all more than enough to earn her a prime spot in the history books, and endless contemplation about her influence, but it's still not close to a complete view of the woman. I haven't even mentioned her stutter yet.

Annie Glenn accomplished all of those things despite a debilitating communicative disorder, disfluency, that she coped with for the first 5 *decades* of her life. She had such an extreme stutter it affected an estimated 85% of the words she spoke. For almost half a century she lived in fear of day-to-day activities like taking public transportation or shopping, but she made do with written notes. When she became a mother she was terrified she would not be understood over the telephone in an emergency- a friend or neighbor was always nearby to help in case. She was expected to be hypersocial but was frequently vexed that she could not make herself understood. She endured multiple unsuccessful psychological treatments for her condition until, at the age of 53, she took part in physical therapy at the Hollins Communications Research Institute, after which she could finally not only speak casually but even publicly, to large audiences. Go back to when we were just talking about her as a music teacher and a pilot, a military wife and mother and grandmother, married for 73 years. Just those accomplishments would be monumental considering the circumstances. Just that life is worthy of admiration, that she overcame decades of constant difficulty to do so much. And then you add Astrowife and American fashion goddess, and the picture of Annie Glenn becomes one of outright superhuman fortitude and courage. Plus, she lived to be a hundred, remember? And her 47 years of hard-earned eloquence were far from a retirement. By some measures, that's where her most important life's work *started*.

In the second half of her life Annie Glenn did not just continue supporting her husband's career, although she did that, again, with enough accomplishments to be any other person's entire life story. She boosted for John when he was a senatorial and a presidential candidate, giving speeches on a national stage. As a senator's wife she was on the board of the National First Ladies' Library. She became an astronaut wife again in her 70's when John Glenn set another record, the oldest man to go to space, aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery. She loved and supported her husband in countless ways until the day he died in December of 2016. But no, in addition to all that, Annie Glenn also became an outspoken advocate for disabled people, campaigning vigorously for 40+ years to promote programs directed at improving the lives of Americans with communications disorders. She traveled extensively with the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), talking openly about her struggles, and by all accounts working wonders of empathy with other sufferers. She never claimed to be "cured" of her stutter, just able to finally cope with it. She served on the National

Deafness and other Communication Disorders Advisory Council of the National Institute of Health, and became an adjunct professor in Speech Pathology at Ohio State University. The first recipient of the Annie Glenn Award, given to those who overcame communication disorders to achieve greatness, was James Earl Jones in 1987. She awarded it to him herself. Think about that for a second: Darth Vader has an award for oratory, and it's named after Annie Glenn.

At this point you may be wondering when the movie about her is coming out. It came out in 1983, John and Annie are both characters in *The Right Stuff*, a movie they reportedly didn't like as much as the Tom Wolfe book it's based on. Hopefully *The Astronaut Wives Club*, a miniseries from 2015 more about Annie and her fellows than John and his, did better. But neither of them shows Annie's life after the 1960's, that story remains to be told. I've heard more than one person compare it to 2010's *The King's Speech*, about King George VI overcoming his stammer. But it's not a perfect comparison- King George overcame his disability, sure, but he was only alive for about 10 more years after that, he smoked himself to death at 56. If we're being totally blunt, he's mostly famous nowadays for being Elizabeth the Second's dad (though with royals that's sort of always why they're famous). It's simply not fair to compare George VI to Annie, she had twice as long as he did and a much more supportive family. And I mean, really, George was only ever just the King of England,

after all.

When I say that Annie Glenn is probably the most accomplished American of all time, I don't mean to tear down her husband Senator Glenn. If I'm right then he's doubtlessly a very close and respectable runner up, as he has often been. But thinking of their accomplishments as discreet from one another is always going to come up short; it's pretty clear Annie Glenn could not have done what she did without her famous husband, and that he could not have done what he did without her. I'm from Ohio and I can confirm that in Senator Glenn's home state the couple are a beloved institution, and the general consensus is that celebrating them just has to be done as a pair. John's boyhood home was restored to its original address in New Concord Ohio as a memorial, but it's still the John and Annie Glenn museum. Perhaps even more charming is the street on Ohio State's campus, Annie and John Glenn Avenue. And it's important to consider that no matter how many death-defying world records John set or positions of power he inhabited, he was always doing so with spotless physical and mental health, we have confirmation of that in the winnowing process to select the Mercury 7 astronauts, and reconfirmation decades later from a whole new generation of NASA doctors who vetted him for the Space Shuttle, by the same criteria as the younger astronauts. He had to cope with fear no doubt, but never the daily, unrelenting fear of a disability that colors every minute of one's life. We don't even need doctors to confirm it, John Glenn admitted as much in his 1999 memoir:

"I saw Annie's perseverance and strength through the years and it just made me admire her and love her even more. It takes guts to operate with a disability; I don't know if I would have had the courage to do all the things that Annie did so well."

There's a line from a John Milton sonnet that people like to quote when they talk about the spouses of servicepeople: "They also serve, who only stand and wait". On its own this hits on an indelible image of Annie Glenn, the astronaut wife who waited for her husband to return from, at the time, the greatest distances humans could travel. Her ability to represent her husband's mission on the ground while he defied death for country, for science, and for all mankind is a beautiful legacy all to itself. But if you dig deeper you'll find that Milton's words apply to Annie Glenn better than most. They're from a poem called *When I Consider How My Light is Spent*, about Milton losing his literary abilities as he went blind. He was worried that he couldn't serve country or even God anymore because of his disability, and resolves a few lines earlier that " who best bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state is kingly". He finds relief, we can hope, in the idea that accomplishments aren't just about the things themselves. That "God doth not need either man's work or his own gifts", but that the test of a person is really in what they overcome to do those things, even if the thing to overcome is acceptance that one's role has to be adjusted to fit their limitations. In that respect, Annie Glenn is probably the most accomplished American who ever lived, she overcame intense difficulty to become a defender of those similarly afflicted, and her string of outrageous and incredible feats of daring is at the very least the equal of her husband's, if it doesn't surpass it. But most importantly, through her trials she transformed those accomplishments into more than just a list of where she was and what she did. They became examples for other people to follow. All of us can know that it's never too late to outdo ourselves, no matter how well we've done already, thanks to the example of Annie Glenn. Her husband circled the Earth a few times, but her inspirational deeds continue to circle it even now after her death.

Anna Margaret Glenn died on Tuesday, May 19 2020. She was 100 years old.

-~Ian "BFM" Helm

5.16 Graduation Speech to the Class of All Hell Has Broken Loose

Tuesday, May 26, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

From the desk of: An Irrefutable Lunatic

Another day in the alembic.

Dearest stranger, I do not need to know you to know you deserve all the love your heart can hold. We share a life on the greatest stretch of Earth humanity has ever known, during an era of such indescribable wonder that one mind alone cannot catalog it. We are capable of the greatest feats ever committed to paper. The collective power we can call upon at a moments' notice defies accounting. There is so much money we're all choking on it.

Do you feel lucky? Do you feel like today is a blessing, like you are as glad to be here as we are to have you? Do you feel like you are part of the grandest undertaking any of us will ever know?

Hell no. This shit sucks out loud. I bet you're feeling like some feral appetite in a cage, all fangs and no smile. Three months is enough time to realize why your exes were right. You have found the balance of your life severely wanting, and every time you set foot outside you risk having it yanked from you lungs first. The only people enjoying this are maniacs and medical supply CEOs.

Care about what I have to say because I am a teacher who hated and failed at school. I did not attend my own graduation ceremony, so we have at least this much in common. I did not go to my own prom, nor a single one of my reunions. I was not missed, like the many of you who will not be missed by the cliques who come to manage your alumni circles. Good riddance!

You are not the sum totality of what happened to you and the resultant gossip. You have been freed from this tyranny prematurely, how *lucky* for you! It is natural to mourn that which was stolen before its due course was run, but do not let this absence define your coming days. This trouble will end all too soon, replaced with an even wilder hell to cross.

You will have your fill of dances before the band breaks up for good. You have to believe that the best is yet to come, that you deserve brighter days. We will make them brighter, together. You are isolated, but you are not alone.

This is not a detour on your path to becoming yourself. This is not a test, it isn't something you can pass or fail, what we are living through is nothing less than the absolute and intentional failure of power to protect the powerless. You have never encountered a more important lesson, no matter what else the disease takes from you, please do not let it take this moral: What happened was preventable. What were are experiencing didn't have to happen. *You must remember, this didn't have to happen.* How you react to this not only speaks volumes about your current character, but will decide the moral arc of this next stage of your life.

I'm so sorry, my dear students. This is a terrible responsibility to lay on ones so young, but your species needs you.

Individualism and solitude can slow the spread of the disease, but it cannot fix the problems that enabled it to spike in the first place. The engine of the West is misfiring, too few have too much, leaving the rest of us to scrabble over the scraps. Pursuing individuality has pitted seven billion against each other in a zero-sum game of exploitation and despair. This is not accidental.

Teamwork is the only thing that can save us, now. Out of every comic book super power, teamwork reigns supreme. Teamwork fed early hominids, gave us the strength and resources needed to develop our massive malfunctioning jerkass brains, helped us conquer the most inhospitable corners of the world out of a sheer stubborn determination to wake up every day in the kind of ecosystem where Here, There Be Dragons.

Now, the dragons are everywhere. Invisible, wrapped around our throats, hiding in our lungs, each breath a cloud of slow-acting incineration. There is no space left for the individual to grow, we're all stacked atop each other in matchstick towers or crammed into moldering suburbs. Denied even the comfort of companionship, the quiet joy of two people sitting in a room, each looking at their separate phones in unbroken silence. Did you ever think you'd miss something so banal?

It is so easy to believe this virus is *evil*, to believe that *evil* is an indiscriminate violence perpetuated by an unknowable, unstoppable force. If evil cannot be stopped, it absolves us of the responsibility to *try.*

Quite the contrary, this evil is intentional and calculated. It is done with the full knowledge of the human cost it is extracting from those most vulnerable among us. There's your dragon for you, hero, it's time to sharpen your lance. Nock the arrow and draw back till the feathers kiss your cheek. Breathe. Anger is only as righteous as the target allows.

Every evil stems from the conscious exploitation of others. Never let an exploiter tell you it's accidental, or unavoidable. They will draw a line in the sand and insist that some suffering is warranted, but if you accept that any can bleed the powerful will never relinquish the knife. Every homeless person is a threat against you, that noncooperation with the kings of the world will see you suffer the same fate. If one of us wears chains, we all wear chains.

When people lie and act in bad faith, especially people in power, what they are telling you is what would have to be true in order to excuse their actions. It is the absolute abrogation of responsibility, the denial of most basic respect. The cheater blames you for emotionally withdrawing to justify running into the arms of another. The abuser blames you for making them mad, when in truth they would become mad no matter what you did. If what they say was true, maybe their actions would be understandable, but they aren't, so they're not. Discard their words accordingly. You've got to anchor yourself in the surety of facts and simply refuse to allow them to move you.

When homophobes call gay people pedophiles, they're attempting to justify bans on gay adoptions. When CHUDs start reciting drivel about "Black on White crime" they're attempting to justify invasive policing and the for-profit carceral state. Don't debate their logic, they don't believe it either. They know what clowns they sound like. Trump didn't believe himself when he called me fat, he just spat the first insult that floated to the surface. Regard it as such.

You cannot trust words. Believe me, I am a writer. Monsters will tell you anything to justify what they were going to do in the first place, and you will waste all your time in circular debates against an asshole who isn't listening to a single thing you're saying in the first place.

If there is a disconnect between word and action, trust action every time. "What they do" is the only part of a leader you can believe in. The dishonest will send you chasing after words every time, hiding the honesty of their intentions behind spin and empty bluster. Don't fall for their sleight of tongue, hold fast to what is true.

There is a figure in Western polemic, a kind of security which is only achieved through an application of violence and surveillance which feels indistinguishable from war. A peace won only through military occupation, how safe are we really when the State has carte blanche justification to execute us in our beds?

Do not worship this god of fortresses, do not tithe it your fear or patriotism. It will sell your neighbor a gun and you body armor in the name of freedom- from what, exactly? Its priests clog the airways, chanting the mantra of *human capital stock,* as if you are a sacrifice for some implacable divinity. They will claim their will is not their own, that the world they shape is built according to the edicts of the Inarguable, and maybe it is. Know a god by the bruises their followers leave upon you. Does that feel like love?

If you have not had the privilege to experience it firsthand, love is what moves a stranger to make the world better for you. Anyone can care for family or friends, it is love that drives altruism, that outlines a fairer way of life. From the Sun's perspective, none of us stands above the other.

It was necessary for those in power to reduce it to tawdry lust, a cheap pink heart-shaped cellphone charm, the same 3 minute pop song our grandparents were conceiving us to. Love has launched revolutions and stymied invasions. If we revived the full power of love and focused it, we would set the sky on fire. Brick would not remain stacked on brick. Greed could not possibly survive the fury of a people united by love.

I love you, stranger. I was made to improve things for us, we both were. No walls are too high for us to scale, no fortress so impervious we cannot silence their guns. It is this love which carries me through the worst storms fate or Robot Hitler or my own nightmares can throw at me. You must trust that it will deliver you to tomorrow, as well.

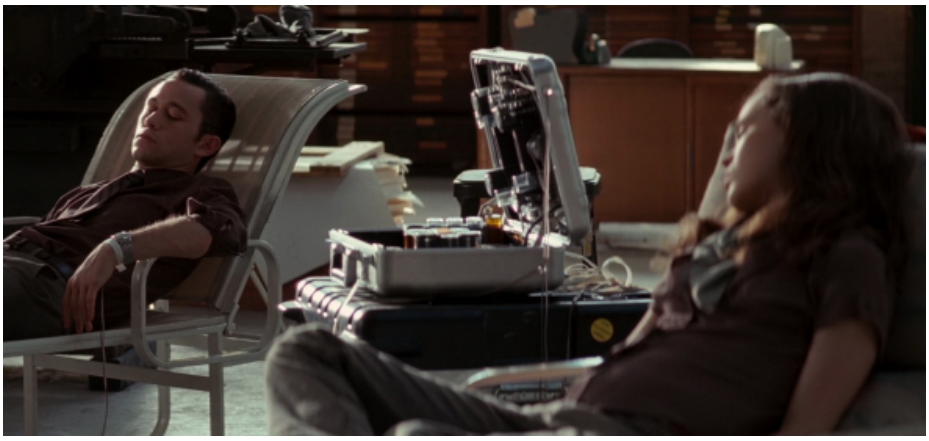
Mourn for the dead, fight like Hell for the living.

That can be best accomplished by joining our stellar forums.

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

5.17 Check Out This Amazing Inception PASIV Device Made By A Forum Member

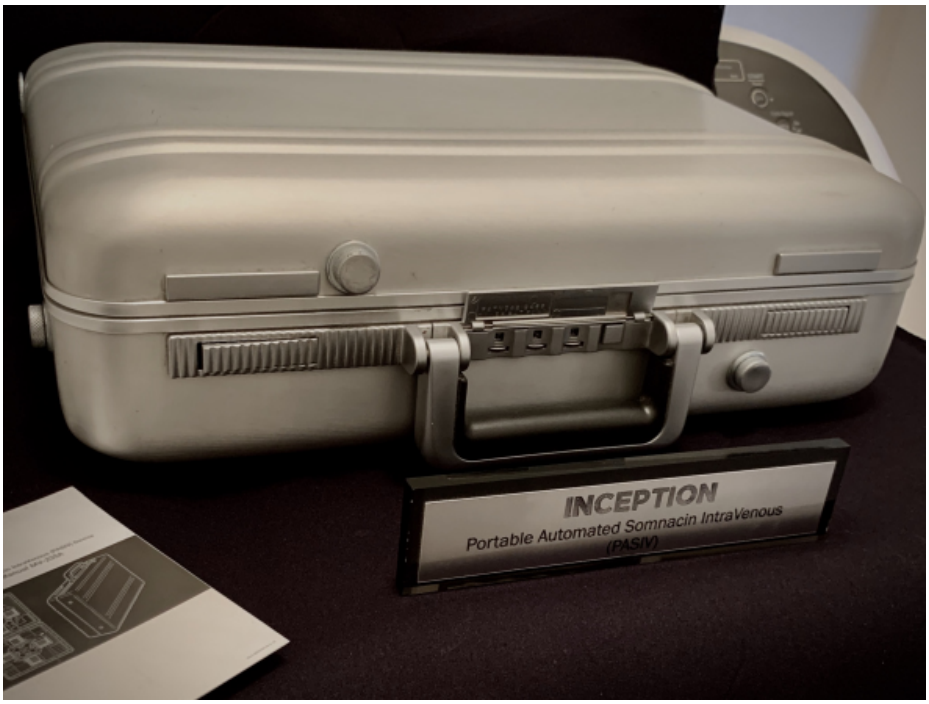
Wednesday, May 27, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)



Our forums are the best place for discussion on the internet. Mostly because the rest of the internet is thoroughly terrible and we're only *mostly* terrible, but still. Best place on the internet for something resembling actual discussion.

Every now and then a forum member posts something so creative and impressive that I stop shouting in anger at my monitor. Today I'd like to highlight a particularly amazing post.

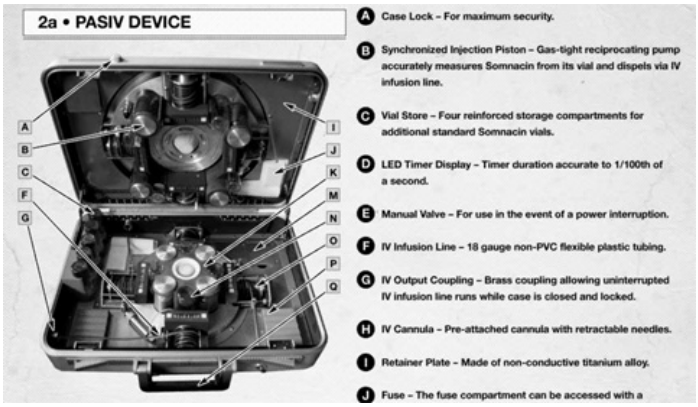
In our comic book subforum (Batman's Shameful Secret) a goon by the name of gregday shared a replica movie prop he had been working on for quite some time.



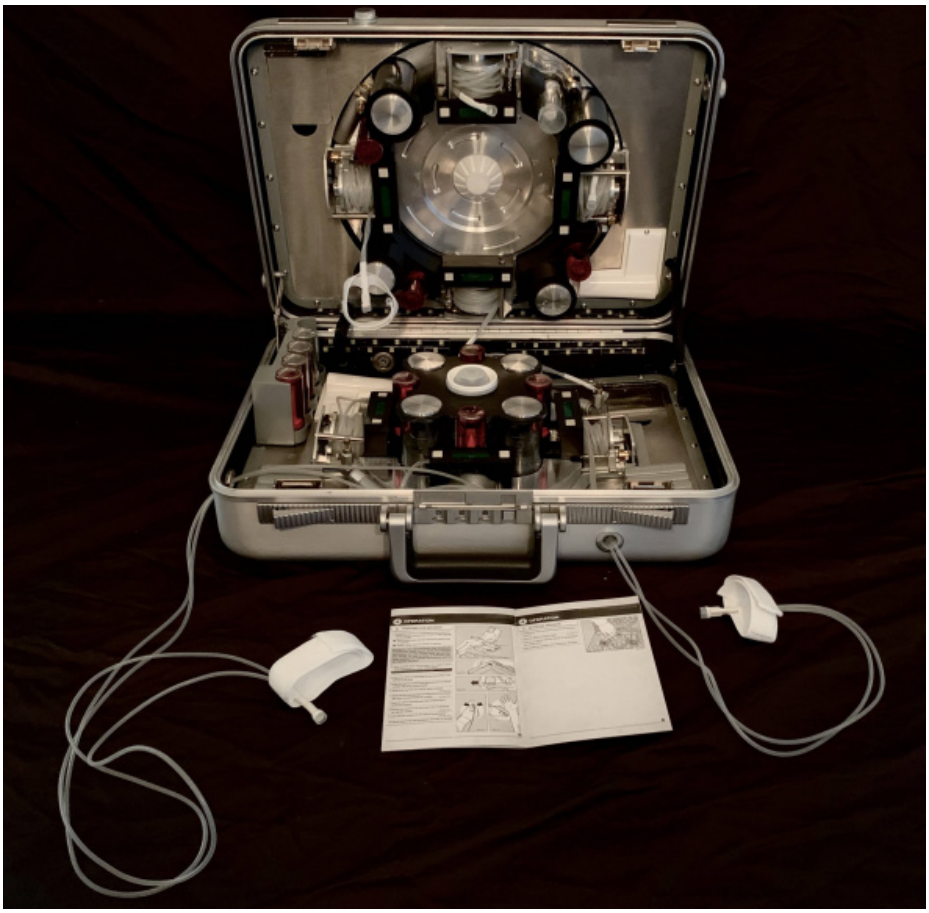
"Well it took longer than I had planned, but last week after 18 months, I finally installed the last component to my PASIV device from Inception."

"It took a lot of CNC machining, 3D printing, and a ton of research and investigating the origins of several obscure parts. In all, 359 components and weighing almost 30 lbs."

Here's what the original film prop looked like:


2a • PASIV DEVICE
A Case Lock – For maximum security.
B Synchronized Injection Piston – Gas-tight reciprocating pump accurately measures Somnacin from its vial and dispels via IV infusion line.
C Vial Store – Four reinforced storage compartments for additional standard Somnacin vials.
D LED Timer Display – Timer duration accurate to 1/100th of a second.
E Manual Valve – For use in the event of a power interruption.
F IV Infusion Line – 18 gauge non-PVC flexible plastic tubing.
G IV Output Coupling – Brass coupling allowing uninterrupted IV infusion line runs while case is closed and locked.
H IV Cannula – Pre-attached cannula with retractable needles.
I Retainer Plate – Made of non-conductive titanium alloy.
J Fuse – The fuse compartment can be accessed with a

And here's gregday's replica:



That is ridiculous. I couldn't have done a better job if I had three years. Hell, I couldn't have done a better job if I owned the original movie prop.

I asked gregday if there was anything he wanted to add.

"I did start to have dreams about dreams after it was completed."

[INCEPTION TRAILER BWOM NOISE]

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

5.18 It's Just a Box

Thursday, May 28, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

[If you checked in for part 4 of the "Covid and Our Mental Health" series, that will be next week. Stage 4 is depression, and that kills people, so I'm taking extra time to make sure everything I say is universally helpful and not open to dangerous interpretation]

I recently purchased a "zizin Metal Raised Garden Bed Outdoor Large Square Planter Box for Vegetables Flower Bed Kit" from Amazon because I base all my agricultural-based shopping decisions on the number of words in the title. I am writing this because I wish to call a small bit of attention to what I believe is a medium amount of largely misleading info on its Amazon page.

My wife has been wanting a victory garden for a while, so I purchased this box as a gift for her for Mother's Day. The product arrived as advertised. While putting it together took some time and effort, I'm no stranger to assembling furniture from parts, I knew it would take some time, but it wouldn't be too big an ordeal.

After all, it's just a box.

The instructions that were supposed to come with the box did not. While I was searching online for them, I came across the Amazon reviews section. This is where things started to depart from reality. "I liked the ease of assembly and simple written instructions," posted one commenter, "easy to set up," said another. In fact, over $\frac{1}{4}$ of the reviewers used the word, "easy" or "simple." I had no reason to be suspicious, looking over the pieces it seemed pretty easy to me.

After all, it's just a box.

I also found this 5-star review comically revealing

★★★★★ **Weedful Things**

Reviewed in the United States on December 29, 2019

Vine Customer Review of Free Product (What's this?)

I'm extremely excited about this, as we just got some really neat seed starter kits (herbs and exotic veg) and my "garden" is overrun by this pernicious stuff (dollar weed) that I cannot get rid of. I've tried everything short of burning the whole thing down with gasoline, but each year it comes back. I can't seem to get all the rhizomes and it ends up eating whatever else I try to plant. This year? I'm moving out of the flower bed. Since it is December and planting much of anything now would be folly, I've only taken the pieces out to examine. It looks very straight-forward, and I'm happy with the materials used. I don't think we'll have a problem at all. In a couple of months, we'll grab some weed block, figure out where we want to put it, and go to town. I have very high hopes for my garden this year.

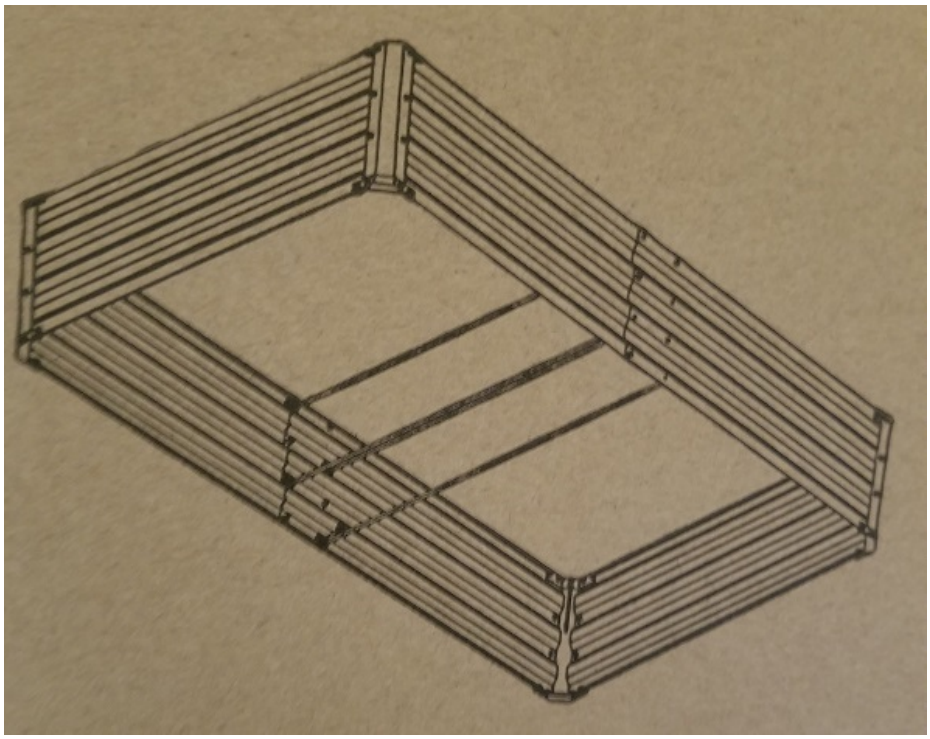
12 people found this helpful

"12 people found this useful." Really?! A dozen honest-to-gosh actual human beings looked at a review which said, "I got this for free. Haven't used it. Barely looked at it. 5 stars!" and decided that, yes, that was somehow helpful in making a purchase.

I didn't really think too much of it at the time, these kind of shenanigans are, of course, rampant when you're buying disassembled furniture from parts unknown. There was a picture on the packaging that seemed to show enough of the finished product for me to put it together.

After all, it's just a box.

So I studied the picture on the box, and this is where I encountered my first real brain-twisting moment in what would be a morning full of- well actually this was really the only brain-twisting moment, but it was a floozy of a doozy:

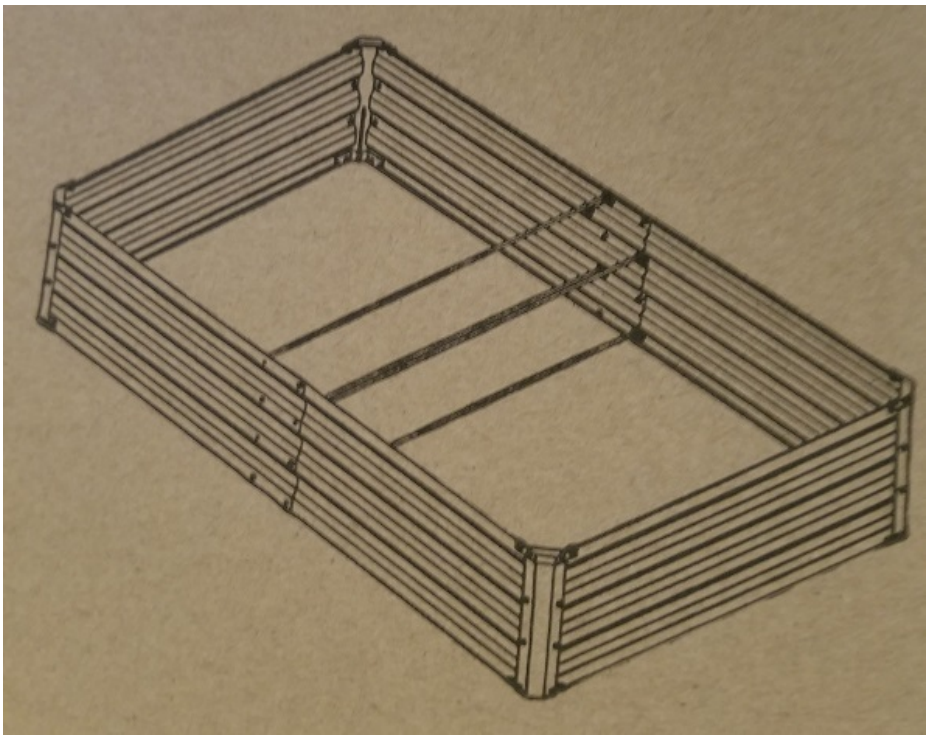


Note how the east-west corners just sort of overlap. Notice the three rods in the center start horizontally aligned and end vertically aligned, rods in this dimension can't do that.

It was no longer a box, it was some M.C. Escherian satan-spawned metal raised garden bed outdoor large square planter box for vegetables flower bed kit from Hell.

I stared at this image for a good three minutes, beads of sweat forming on my forehead and elbows (it's genetic, okay?!) Finally, my eyes refocused, and I realized something game-changing:

I was looking at the image upside-down:



Okay, that one's on me zizin.

Armed with this new information, everything looked pretty much straightforward. Still, realizing I may need another tip or two like, "turn it upside down, idiot," I turned to the Q-and-A part of the product. Looking back, this was where most of the misinformation was presented.

Question: Can garden bed be broken down for moving to different place?

Answer: Yes.Our metal raised garden bed kit is easy to assemble and disassemble.'

There were 58 separate bolts and 58 separate screws

.We have clear assembly instructions.

I did not receive any instructions

Only take you a few minutes to do it.

Zizin Seller · September 9, 2019

It took me 2 hours after I had figured out the diagram.

Once I finished, the rest of the reviews seemed correct: It was quite sturdy and seemed well-sealed against escaping dirt.

So, I want to thank you, zizin company, for helping me give the best Mother's Day I have ever given. It wasn't the garden box, though, it was the three sweat-and-swear filled hours I spent putting this together to show my wife I cared. For this, I bestow upon your product my highest honor: 3 out of 5 stars.

@Evan Hoovler

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

Chapter 6

June

6.1 Schrödinger's Gay

Monday, Jun 01, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

On and off throughout my life, I debated internally whether or not I was *theoretically(!!!)* bisexual. This was for a long time a particular puzzle for me when I first learned of the term in High School, partially because the idea of "being on the fence" was often thrown around as an indicator that someone was undecided or just closeted, or worse - *attention seeking*. And of course, my attraction to women being unambiguous for as long as I can remember, made me frequently push aside any brief thoughts of hunky man meat as "explorative thinking" and nothing more. Oh, and I was growing up in Utah. No reason to mention that.

These thoughts were always floating around throughout my childhood, of course, but back then I didn't even know what to think of them. I remember being really attracted to Michael Jackson in a video cassette of *Thriller* our family owned, and was surprised to later learn that Michael Jackson was in fact, a boy. Well that can't be right! I wouldn't have felt this way about a *boy*. What an error I have made! Boys like girls, a fact I knew well from all the Disney Princess movies we had droning on constantly in the background. A fact I knew from experience, having another early sexual awakening when I first watched *Aladdin*. Jasmine was quick to affirm for me my apparent heterosexuality, but the funny feeling I got while looking at Aladdin himself? Must be something I ate.

Naturally, these experiences never went away. For a short time in High School I thought "ohhhh shit I'm a closeted gay aren't I?" Was my attraction to women an illusion? If it was, it was a rather powerful illusion that made my basement rumble, soooo no. It seemed quite obvious on one end of the scale, but somewhat foggy and interchanging on the other. It took a very specific kind of dude to make that scale waver, so again, I brushed it aside. There were plenty of attractive ladies to be rejected by after all, no need to expand the pool of rejection *am I right fellas?* Actually, that's a lie, I did at one point think going "full gay" would be the solution to my loneliness problem but I eventually realized how stupid that sounded and moved along.

But ya know, time passes and eventually bisexuality becomes a little more normalized as a real thing that exists and isn't just a phase or sign that you need an extra dose of gay to complete the ritual. Well, mostly. By the time this paradigm shift even happens though, I'm in a committed straight

relationship with a marvelous woman who I later do a marry with, so I guess it's all a moot point right? Am I just an attention-seeking asshole if I come out with it now? Probably.

In my college years I, of course, dive deeper and deeper into progressive politics. Gain a few gay friends, extra ally points for me! Wow, what a woke manly white dude I am. Here, my presumed "straightness" gets solidified into a symbol of my own identity in allyship. I mean, here I am a white, cis, beardy man in a straight committed relationship. There ain't no one coming to take away *my* rights over here, no one calling *me* slurs, so to insert myself as anything more than an ally would make me look selfish and attention-grabby. Did I intend on DOING gay stuff with that side of myself while I was in a relationship? Nope! So shut up, bisexuality, sit in the back where you belong. I didn't *earn* the right to call myself anything but straight.

For years during my marriage, I felt pretty comfortable with this idea on the surface. Surely, if I'm in a straight marriage, and die in a straight marriage, I'm de-facto straight. Labels are silly anyway, right? What would claiming to be bisexual really accomplish, anyway? Am I just out here looking to join the cool gays' club, a convenient excuse to join the party without having to deal with any of the downsides? Am I really about to identify myself by a label that in my life just translates to me making little remarks about hot sweaty men on the television with my wife? Seems rather silly.

But every year, Pride Month would come. Big old celebration of the whole LGBTQ+ spectrum, B is even in there, eh? And every Pride, I would reconsider this notion, then deny myself the identity for all the reasons I grew up with, and for all the reasons I came to convince myself of. Like Jesus, who gives a shit anyway? It's 2019, no one cares and it will change my life exactly zero percent. Keeping it to myself is the only way I know I'm not being selfish with the label. The only way I know I'm not just seeking attention, or wanting a superficial reason to more "officially" join a community I have long come to admire from afar. I believe these things sincerely, but no matter how hard I try, I can never quite shake the desire to claim it publicly. The whole time, it's been trying desperately to be heard.

One way or another, I've always been telling my friends and loved ones this part of myself. But never in those words. "Ironic" jokes where I hyperbolically talk about how attractive a certain male celebrity is? You bet. Getting knock-out drunk during get-togethers and slurring some not-so-vague implications? Every time. Taking every single opportunity I can to talk about LGBTQ+ filmmakers, my "ironic" love for *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, and just about any other gay-adjacent thing that passes through my periphery? Good god, yes, it won't stop.

So why does this feel so important to me? I guess the same way any aspect of someone's sense of self is important? I define myself by a lot of things; my interests, my hobbies, my accomplishments, my beliefs, my vast dusty collection of rubber halloween masks. In a way, it feels like this aspect of myself has taken an unnecessary backseat in my life, first because of uncertainty, then because it made me feel guilty or prideful. I don't define myself by my sexuality exclusively, but *it deserves a seat at the table*, damn it.

So hey My Bisexuality, pull up a chair.

Happy Pride!

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

6.2 Knifedad Chat: Phil Elmore

Tuesday, Jun 02, 2020 by Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

This article is part of the Karate Johnathan: Knifedad Hero series.

You can't tell but I'm SUPER jazzed to be interviewing my idol.

Today, we bring you an interview with the foremost elder statesman in the Knifedad community. This is the dude who basically invented wearing swords in the modern age, the Sifu of Street Sai, the Grandmaster Flashlight himself, Phil Elmore! So, would you care to introduce our new readers to your seminal work?

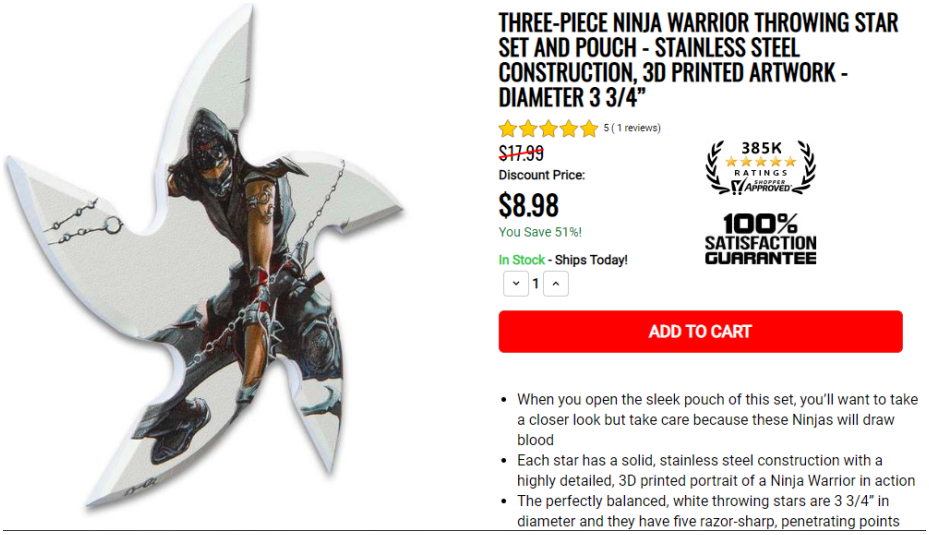
Street Sword is a funny book. I wrote it 13 years ago, and all I was trying to do was right a book about basic sword mechanics. I'd searched for such a book and, not finding it, I decided to write one. I'd already written one book for Paladin Press -- "Flashlight Fighting," which was the first book I know of that taught basic striking techniques, cribbed from Japanese yawara, and applied them to small handheld flashlights. I pitched the book to Paladin, and they were skeptical, so I remember putting together some proof-of-concept material for them.

The man who invented bringing a knife to a gunfight.

The techniques are super basic. They're mostly Kali and Filipino Martial Arts techniques, nothing remarkable. Everything went fine until it came time to give it a title. Paladin presented me with a list of titles they were prepared to accept, and believe it or not, "Street Sword" was the *least* objectionable. In other words, the book was published with a title that made people think it was about exactly the *opposite* of what it was *really* about. It never sold as well as Flashlight Fighting (which was a great seller for Paladin while it was in print) because of this ill-conceived marketing.

In retrospect, though, I don't mind. If not for that silly title -- and their indulging me in what is an admittedly silly cover -- it would never have achieved this weird pop-culture almost-fame that it has. Chris Hardwick made fun of it on @Midnight; Break.com made fun of it; I think it's been "The Worst Things For Sale." Every so often I go on Twitter and find people talking about it, and then respond to them, which I think everybody involved finds fairly amusing. I mean, if I went on Twitter and complained about a book I read in 2006, and the author chimed in and was in on the joke... that would be a fun moment.

Undoubtedly. I was once exiled from the Poetry Slam community because my insistent mockery of Ready Player One became intolerable to the myriad and rabid Ernest Cline stans which organized all the shows. What's your take on this BUDK treasure, shuriken decorated with stolen cover art from the Xbox game "Ninja Gaiden"? This is the ideal weapon for getting arrested at an anime convention.


THREE-PIECE NINJA WARRIOR THROWING STAR SET AND POUCH - STAINLESS STEEL CONSTRUCTION, 3D PRINTED ARTWORK - DIAMETER 3 3/4"
5 (1 reviews)
$17.99
Discount Price:
$8.98
You Save 51%!
In Stock - Ships Today!
1
ADD TO CART
385K
RATINGS
100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE
When you open the sleek pouch of this set, you'll want to take a closer look but take care because these Ninjas will draw blood
Each star has a solid, stainless steel construction with a highly detailed, 3D printed portrait of a Ninja Warrior in action
The perfectly balanced, white throwing stars are 3 3/4" in diameter and they have five razor-sharp, penetrating points

Settle down, Naruto.

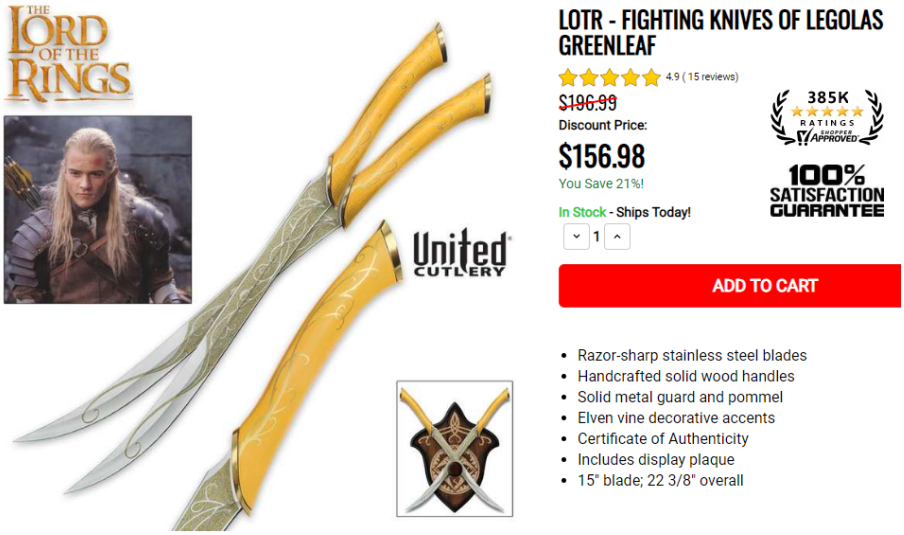
What I love about the 3-Piece Ninja Warrior Throwing Star Set is that I don't think there really is such a thing as "3D-printed art" in this context. I guess they mean the art is evocatively three-dimensional, rather than printed from a 3D printer? Or maybe the shuriken are 3D printed? But that seems unlikely and they're probably just silk-screened which, honestly, is disappointing. But I know that if I were hurling throwing stars at my enemies, I would want them to be momentarily distracted by the artwork. Like, here it comes, zzzzzzzing past a guy's face, and in Bullet Time, his eyes widen as he says, in slow motion, "Thaaaaat isss some greaaaat silk-screen printinnnnnnggggg" before the shuriken slices his throat open and dies a horrible, gurgling death.

They're basically a Krull glaive for knowing the meaning of ephebophelia. The only thing they can wound is the reputation of the owner. They'd be less dishonorable if they murdered their husbands by dripping poison in his ear. Have you ever seen a shuriken assault in the streets? I'm tempted to keep one of those silk sheets Kung Fu ladies catch thrown weapons with, but my EDC kit is already

pretty unwieldy.

You don't want that. You want one of those metal-tined fans with ninjas and kanji silk-screened across them. That's all you need to deflect dull shuriken. I've never actually seen anyone attacked with ninja stars, but then, by definition, you don't see the attack. You only see your sentries pitch forward with ninja stars embedded in their heads, and then it's too late. You do have, sentries, right? If you don't, you should get some.

If the Interlopers are crinkly paper balls or closed bathroom doors, my cats will suffice. I had hoped the silk sheets would help me get back into the competitive Ribbon Dance scene, after my terrible "accident" at the Sarajevo Olympics, but I can't compete with the ribbon-bots Tesla is cranking out. Entire industry is gonna be automated into extinction by 2021, mark my words. In the world of Hollywood replica weapons, how would you rate Legolas's twinblades? Frankly I think they're well suited to slicing, but I'm really more of a dicer. Curious for the pro's perspective (prospective)



It's not gay to let an elf do stuff to your butt.

United Cutlery has a long and distinguished history of equipping the nation's video store clerks and dungeon masters for melee combat. When I was in college (back when video stores existed), I owned several United Cutlery daggers, just in case I was set upon by orcs or highwaymen. My favorite was their Scorpion dagger, which had a tiny push dagger in the tubular handle that you were supposed to coat in poison. (Yo dawg, we heard you like knives, so we put a dagger in your dagger so you can stab while you stab.) Regrettably, the poison was sold separately.

In all seriousness, if you never use them, United makes some nice looking stainless steel movie replicas suitable for hanging on a wall and, uh, never using. (If you wield a full-sized sword made of stainless steel, especially a movie replica with a rat-tail tang inside a plastic handle, you run a very real risk of the sword snapping in half under its own weight. (If that happens but the flying end lands in your enemy, take credit for it.) These Legolas blades are short enough that this is probably not a big danger, but I'm not sure I'd want to test that theory.

Rat Tailz & Tang sounds like an Insane Clown Posse album about 6th grade antics. Definitely trending more towards finding an ammo box stash of titty magazines in the woods and saying cusses in a church than video clerk barbarians felling foes with spring-loaded poison blades and Hollywood replica swordapaults (plastic hand held blade launcher, patent pending.)

While we're on the subject, what kind of poisons would even be effective on a blade? I'm looking

around my kitchen like, bleach? Ammonia? That would just sterilize the wound. Ant poison works on ants not humans. Are folks home-brewing their own alchemical distillations? I got mint and oregano, I'll make tabbouleh out of their organs. Sun Tzu never covered offensive horticulture in The Art of War.

If you had to defend your honor with a fantasy replica weapon, which would you use?

I knew a guy once who swore that nicotine could be somehow distilled from cigarettes to form a deadly, deadly poison. Attempting to do so probably falls under the heading of things that you might be idly interesting in trying, but shouldn't because it will earn you a Darwin Award for reasons that have yet to be identified (but which will surely assert themselves during the process).

I know exactly which fantasy replica weapon I would use to defend my home, at least, because I've done it. I once owned a Marto "Highlander" replica katana that I kept on a stand in my apartment. There was a disturbance in the hallway outside the apartment, and I took that blade and went looking to see what the matter was. I was very young, in my early 20s, and not very smart about these things. I've since learned that you can, you know, just stay inside and not answer the door, and thus all the difficulty is successfully circumvented.

Fun fact: That Highlander replica katana had the aforementioned "rat tail tang," a cylinder of metal connecting the blade to the handle. It broke, and while the blade never separated from the handle, you could hear the broken piece of metal rattling around in there. This was long before I knew anything at all about swords, and it was years before I wrote "Street Sword." I look back on those days and remember fondly the fact that, while I was very foolish, I at least had hair.

That reminds me of the time I was attacked by the spectral visage of a phantasmal barbarian, who was about to strike me down with an ethereal short-handled flail, before I pointed out that his weapon was historically anachronistic and he deflated with a comedic whoopee-cushion sound effect.

But aside from that, I've generally found that all wielding a sword during tense situations does is focus the police anxiety on me, exclusively. I like this idea of instead waiting out trouble from behind a heavy oak door, I bet there's a Masterclass to be held on all the defensive jutsus possible with a solidly built, well-hung door. For example, disarming dudes by opening it a little so they stick their gun in and then you slam it on their wrist for Maximal Damage, set it on its side on a pair of sawhorses for a beer pong table, then jump on one end causing it to flip up and hit a pair of Sword Dudes in the chins, or duck behind it and then slamming it in the face of a pursuer. Critical hits are likely to stun them for a moment, if you see stars and lil pink birds circling around their head, they're ripe for a Coup de Grâce. I'm gonna put a pin in that for now and circle back to this idea later.

I'm curious, though, when you wrote your book on flashlight defense, did you ever imagine a product like this hitting the market? I presume this is a deadly weapon only in the sense that it could be swallowed by an especially dedicated survivalist, but it strikes me as defeating the purpose of Flashlight Kata in the first place. Surely, mounting Hot Topic grade spikes on a non-weapon would, in the eyes of law enforcement, render it a Weapon? And why mount them on the front, near the actually useful flashlight part of the flashlight?

That's one in a series of innovations in a weird arms race for small "tactical" flashlights. The idea is that you hold the light in your fist and strike with the bezel in a downward, hammerfist motion. Lots of flashlights have "crenelated" bezels for this reason, although this is only one of a few I've seen that goes so far as to mount what is essentially tiny bayonets to the light. There are even flashlights that aren't flashlights at all, but stun guns with flashlights built into them. They're amazingly popular despite the fact that it strikes me as an accident waiting to happen. I get by with relatively tame flashlights by comparison, but I'm not going to lie: If I could buy one that actually had a bayonet mount, I would. And so would you.

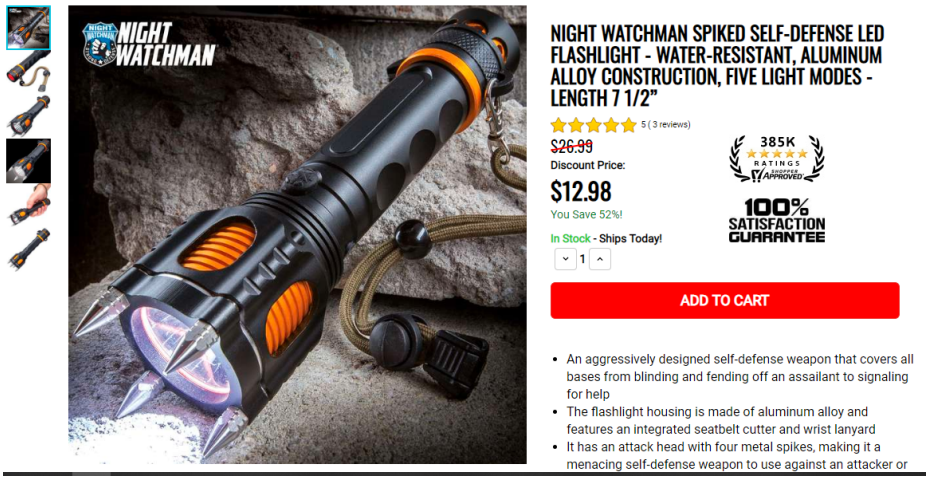

NIGHT WATCHMAN
NIGHT WATCHMAN SPIKED SELF-DEFENSE LED FLASHLIGHT - WATER-RESISTANT, ALUMINUM ALLOY CONSTRUCTION, FIVE LIGHT MODES - LENGTH 7 1/2”
5 (3 reviews)
$26.99
Discount Price:
$12.98
You Save 52%!
In Stock - Ships Today!
385K RATINGS
100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE
ADD TO CART
An aggressively designed self-defense weapon that covers all bases from blinding and fending off an assailant to signaling for help
The flashlight housing is made of aluminum alloy and features an integrated seatbelt cutter and wrist lanyard
It has an attack head with four metal spikes, making it a menacing self-defense weapon to use against an attacker or

Exhibit 2, Appleton County vs. Johnathan "Karate" Stigginitz

i would mount a smaller flashlight onto my flashlight bayonet in case my primary flashlight was disabled due to Violence. Likewise, I dream of the day I am able to incapacitate a roomful of seizure-prone nazis by whaling on them with my Flashlight Nunchucks (FlashChucks, patent pending).

I once worked with an Eagle Scout at a summer-camp who fashioned a "Janitor's Flail" by attaching his formidable bundle of keys to the bottom of his MagLite through a length of cosmetic bicycle chain he wore as a necklace. A boy is a medium through which harm is inflicted upon the world, and himself.

What's the smallest, most tactical flashlight you could feasibly take down a nazi rioter with?

There's a tiny keychain light called the Photon Microlight that's about the size of a quarter in diameter. It won't be easy, but if you can take down a man with a light that size, you'll easily command the respect of your peers -- and, more importantly, you'll get women.

You will not get women.

i would attach it to my forehead through a length of medical tape and then, through use of cleverly recorded sound effects and darkened subterranean tunnel, make it look like a train was approaching a malcontented group of III%er militia types hellbent on Mischief. My Looney Fu is unconquerable.

Before we sign off for the day, do you have any parting words to our loyal, absolutely unradicalized

readers?

I can add only this: A lot of people don't take self-defense seriously. Those people are wrong. A lot of people do take self-defense seriously and, honestly, those people are wrong too. It's one of those things you don't realize until a late-night cable talkshow host with an audience of tens of people is telling the world, while standing in front of a picture of your 13-year-old book about swords, that you probably trick unsuspecting people into the back of your cargo van. I mean, I'm not saying he's wrong, but still.

> Did you know that our forums community has been around since November 1999, basically older than the Elder Gods of Ancient Lore of which we do not speak? Well, now you do, you nincompoop! You should check the forums out here if you know what's good for you (this is not a threat, please do not send me a Cease & Desist).

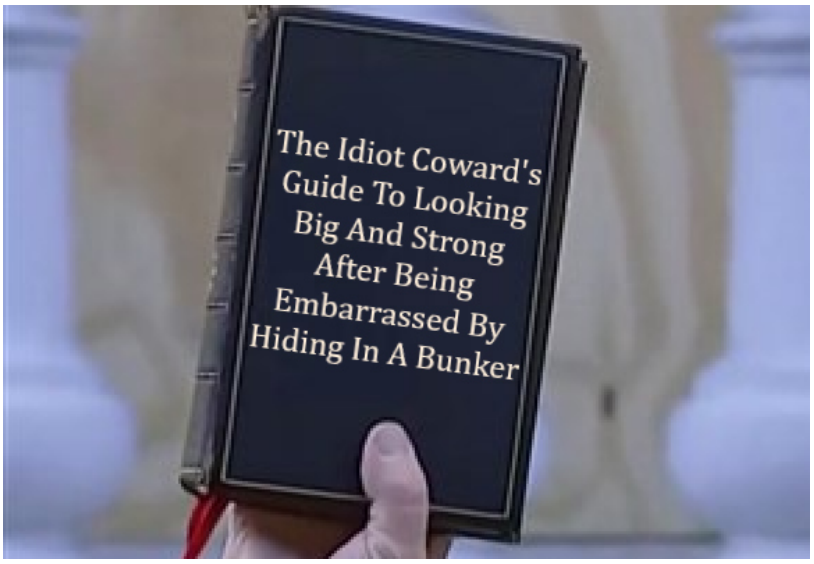
-∼Senpai Knifedad (@maltschlitzmann)

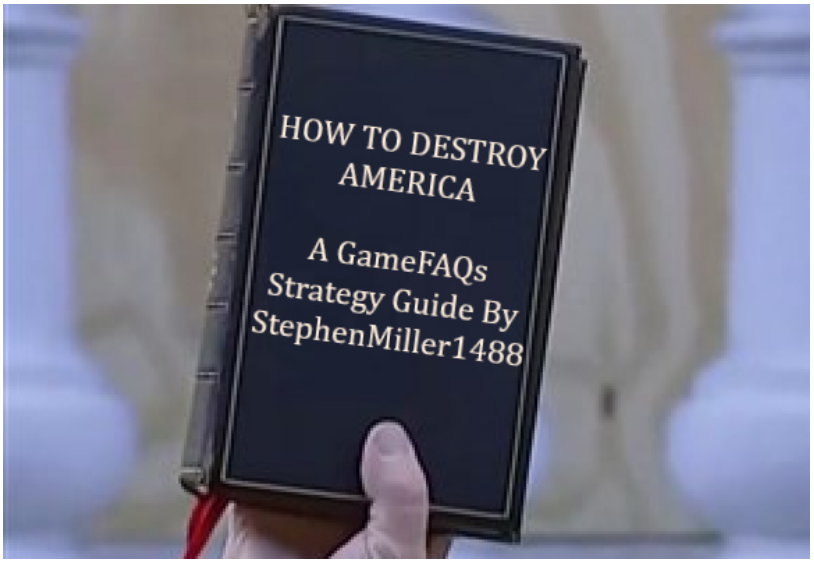
6.3 A Closer Look At The Photo Op Bible Trump Spilled Blood To Awkwardly Pose With

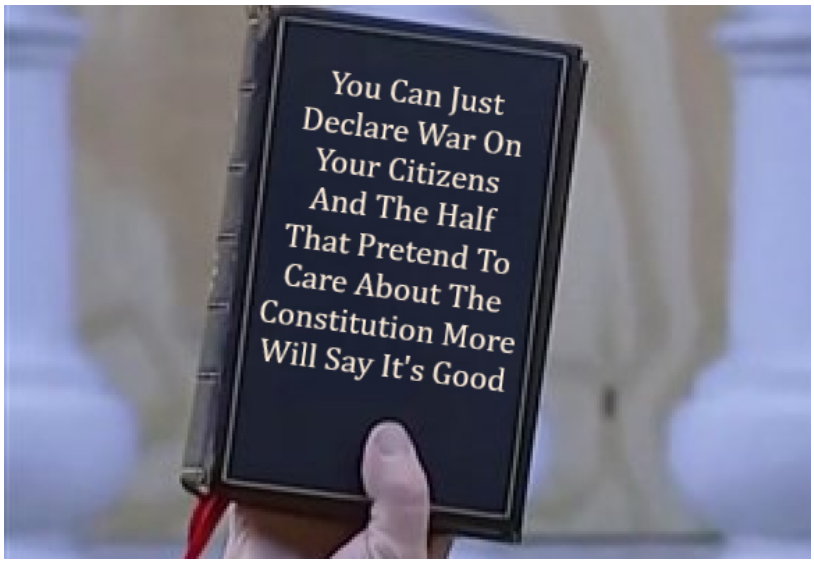
Wednesday, Jun 03, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

101 TOUGH SCOWLS
(Looking Like You've Been Tricked Into Eating A Vegetable Is Close Enough)

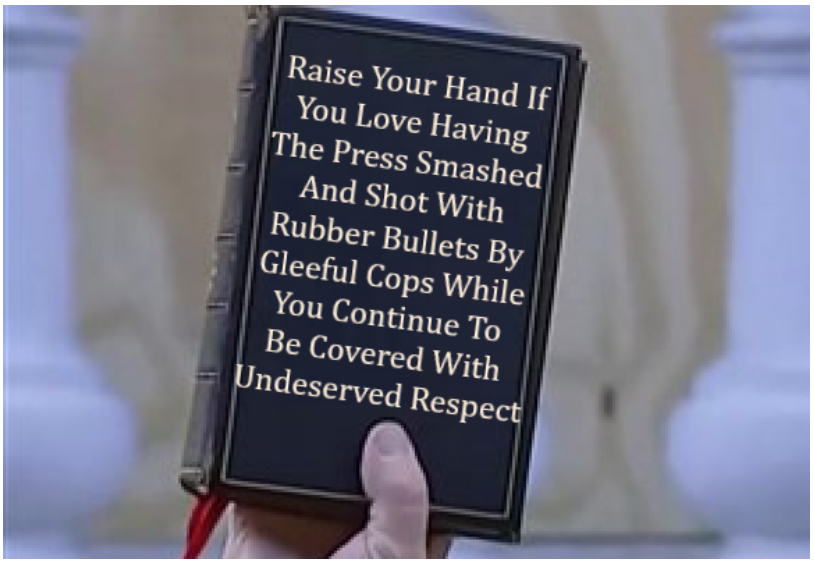
Secret Plans: Dry Run For Suppressing The American People In November


The Idiot Coward's
Guide To Looking
Big And Strong
After Being
Embarrassed By
Hiding In A Bunker


HOW TO DESTROY
AMERICA
A GameFAQs
Strategy Guide By
StephenMiller1488


You Can Just
Declare War On
Your Citizens
And The Half
That Pretend To
Care About The
Constitution More
Will Say It's Good

Why Does Every
Transparent Act
Of Projection
Reveal How
Pathetic I Am?
(An Oddly
Titled Diary)



-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

6.4 How to Convince Your Loved Ones to Support the Protests

Thursday, Jun 04, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

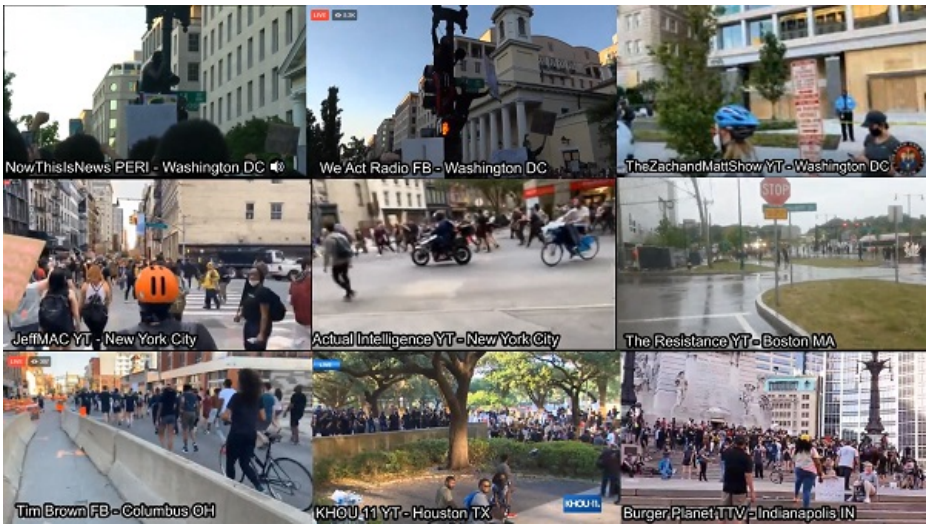
The revolution may not be televised, but it sure is being live-streamed everywhere. I was going to write about the depression stage of dealing with Covid, but it seems that we've all collectively decided to circle back to the anger stage. Fine! We'll pull a Back to the Future in terms of emotional healing.

However, on our return trip through the five stages of grief, a bunch of people got stuck up in the denial phase. I can understand that: Charmin straight up assuring the public that they can continue their ridiculous toilet-paper-buying frenzy unabated

broke me for a few solid days. If you have friends or family that are normally rational, but are now talking like these mass protests aren't, like, the most greatest thing ever, here are some tricks I've been finding successful.

Tip #1: Show Them the Live-Streams

First and foremost, start going here after 2 PM PST, every day: www.twitch.tv/woke. You should see something like this.


NowThisIsNews PERI - Washington DC
We Act Radio FB - Washington DC
TheZachandMattShow YT - Washington DC
JeffMAC YT - New York City
Actual Intelligence YT - New York City
The Resistance YT - Boston MA
Tim Brown FB - Columbus OH
KHOU 11 YT - Houston TX
Burger Planet TTV - Indianapolis IN

It's like the Brady Bunch intro... if Mike and Carol Brady had spawned hundreds of children and crowded them together in six different cities.

This is the most popular source for curating live streams of people walking around the protests. You get to see what's happening unedited and unfiltered. Please Note: If you go to this feed too early you get streams of people playing video games. Don't panic: I'm organizing violent protests against that after this current state of affairs resolves.

Seeing an unmoderated feed is critical: Peaceful protests don't get clicks for mainstream news sites. Riots and looting get hits. So people who are getting their riot news anywhere but straight from the source tend to think there's way more looting. They also miss out on wonderful protesting moments like the one I'm calling Terrace Hill Trash Night.

In Des Moines, protestors took to the Governor's mansion on Terrace Hill. After being pushed down the steps and across the street by tear gas, the demonstrators lined up on the sidewalk chanting. At

one point, someone threw a trash can at the police line, which fell short and spewed trash everywhere. There was a pause, then someone yelled "pick it up!" Soon, people are shouting at the trash thrower to go pick it all up. They sheepishly go into the street and pull the can upright, the crowd jumps in and picks up all the loose trash, putting it neatly back in the can. This wasn't covered on any news website, I can't even find the footage. But it happened, it was adorable, and I laughed.

Using these live streams as your medium to the protests, and sharing it with as many people as possible is the greatest thing you can do to help the cause of exposing police brutality. Well, I guess protesting is the greatest thing you can do. But sharing live streams is the second best- no, there's donating money, that's more useful, too. I will set my official ranks of how important I think everything is later and get back to you.

Tip #2 Explain that Looting and Rioting Is Happening Way Less than Reported

I've watched tons of hours of protests. I've pretty much had streams for at least 6 cities running 10 hours per day. My interior monologue now comes out in a series of rhyming chants. So far, I've seen looting at about one-fifth of the protests and they all fit a very non-alarming profile: They occur away from the main protest, they feature no protesters (no one holding signs, looting in packs of mask-wearing college kids, etc.), they are never stopped by police, and people love looting Starbucks for no reason that I can possibly come up with.

I've seen packs of protesters defend stores, but I haven't seen one police officer at a looting, one tear gas grenade lobbed inside a broken shop window. Not one in my now hundreds of hours watching protest feeds. So, not only looting is not happening anywhere near as often as it appears in the headlines, the headlines like, "Looting threatens police" links together two elements that, as far as I've seen, haven't even appeared on the same street at the same time.

Oh, wait, except when police are suspected of instigating the looting. So I guess I was wrong and it's even worse than my acidic take, hooray.

Tip #3: Rebuff These Common Arguments with Simple Logic

A misleading "common sense" argument seems to hold up a lot of my friends from getting why these protests are necessary. Dismantling this argument with reason is usually enough to get them on board. Here are the most common platitudes I've heard:

Tear gas and rubber bullets are not police brutality: If they didn't want to get sprayed, they shouldn't have been out after curfew.

Response: "So, you're saying that if demonstrators followed the rules, they wouldn't be attacked by police... at a protest over people following the rules and still being attacked by police?" Be sure to go up an octave at that last word. Extend the final syllable while turning to give them the side-eye. Some people respond to logic, others to emotion, so work both angles at once.

If you yell and swear at police over and over, don't be surprised if they attack you.

Response: "Yes, you should be surprised! Do you attack every cursing homeless person you pass on the way to work? No, not after that one time! You ignore them and move on." A major point of these protests is to show that police aren't trained in any form of crowd management in between, "standing there," and, "unloading a cloud of nerve gas so thick you'd expect K.I.S.S. to pop out and start rocking in it."

Every protester is actually being paid by George Soros and are part of an anti-republican-president agenda and also George Soros is a lizard person, but not one of the good ones.

Response: "The fallacy with this is- Oh, my, would you look at the time."

Tip #4: Don't Burn Your Bridges Too Quickly

If you're not getting through to people you otherwise get along with, just encourage them to watch the live streams of the protests, and move on. For all we know, those people could just be otherwise perfectly rational people who are just Having a Weird One in terms of moving on from the grief stage. In fact, that's a great way to frame it for your own mental sanity: They just need a lot more time to come to terms with the significance of everything that has been happening, this year.

You can't let yourself get impulsively worked up about the protests. Because once the protests are done, you're going to have to not get worked up about Covid, then once that's passed you're going to have to stay calm about the economy. Then the election. It's a Russian nesting doll, except all of the dolls are peaceful Buddhas but they all have increasingly red faces and an uncontrollable eyeball twitch.

Evan Hoovler

[Photo Credit: https://www.newsbreak.com/minnesota/minneapolis/news/0PBkehZe/masked-white-man-s
0]

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

6.5 Bad Apple Resents Being Compared To Cops

Monday, Jun 08, 2020 by Bad Apple (@slicknicklives)

I don't have the best reputation, being a bad apple responsible for the extremely subtle artificial apple flavoring in Apple Jacks cereal and all, but damn it if I'm not sick and tired of all these comparisons people keep making between me and those wife-beating pigs. Not to unfairly compare them to my good friend, Bad Pig. Sorry about that.

Look, I'm a racist, I admit. I absolutely have it out for the Rastafarian cinnamon stick known only as Cinna-Mon. And yes, I do try to sabotage him at every turn with wacky hijinks on our daily sprint to the cereal bowl. Because I hate his race. The cinnamon race. But I am NOT so racist that I try to systematically murder his people, incarcerate cinnamons disproportionately, and beat cinnamons every chance I get to make my apple-balls feel big. Because I'm better than that. Because *I'm* not a fucking cop.

Do I resort to violence sometimes? Absolutely. I've had my fair share of throwing holes on the floor for Cinna-mon to fall into, uprooting the sidewalk and comically flopping it like a rug to trip up Cinna-mon's sprint, and running after him with grabby hands. But have I ever fired tear gas at Cinna-mon as he peacefully sat on the ground? Have I ever shot him point-blank in the face with rubber bullets, or real bullets for that matter? Absolutely not! It would take a real fascist petty bastard to commit crimes like that, so I'd appreciate it if you folks would stop drawing parallels between us.

Moreover, I actually pay for the consequences of *my* actions. Anytime Cinnamon out-maneuvers me, I splat against the window, flattening my face and sliding down slowly, murmuring "But they're called APPLE Jacks" to myself. That is my punishment for my vanity and over-eagerness to jump in the big bowl of cereal before a giant child takes their first bite. That, my friends, is called justice. What sort of justice do all these bullies in blue see when they repeatedly harass, beat, murder, and incarcerate unarmed black folk? You don't need to hold a nationwide protest to see me pay *my* dues, because again, I'm not the god damn fuzz.

And NEVER, in my whole tasty nutritious part of a complete breakfast life, have I ever stood idly

by while a fellow apple shoved a cane-wielding senior citizen onto hard cement, or murder a literal child. I may be a bad apple, but ya gotta draw the line somewhere! Us cereal folk keep each other in check, because the flavor balance of Apple Jacks has to be just the right amount of both cinnamon and apple, unless we're doing Cinnamon Jacks or Limited Edition Apple Jacks: Apple Clones with bonus apple puffs. The point is, *we* have fuckin' standards and basic oversight to prevent apples from doing whatever the fuck they want and making society their plaything. *We* keep each-other accountable.

So quit comparin' me to these flat foot bootlickers! As I've clearly illustrated, I ain't done nothin' to earn such a slanderous connection. Fuck the Police, and try eatin' some Apple Jacks, they ain't as bad as you remember.

Hey fellow Antifa terrorist! Help bail out some protestors if you haven't already, and keep protesting! Also you can join the Something Awful forums if you'd like I guess.

-~Bad Apple (@slicknicklives)

6.6 Which of the 24 HBO Streaming Services is Right For You?

Wednesday, Jun 10, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

HBO GO
Every HBO series, minus episode 2 of each season.

HBO NOW
The entirety of Arli$$ and nothing else.

HBO MAX
Episode 2 of every HBO series.

HBO MAX I SAID GO
All seasons of HBO's Real Sex, edited to be PG.

HBO LEAVE ME HERE MAX I'M A GONER
Every movie you could ever want to watch, presented backwards and squished in the corner of the screen like a YouTube upload trying to avoid a copyright strike.

HBO GO MAX YOU HAVE SO MUCH TO LIVE FOR
Doesn't work on Roku.

HBO MAX GET THE KID TO SAFETY MAKE MY SACRIFICE WORTH IT
Doesn't work on any device, not even via a web browser!

HBO HERE THEY COME, NOW RUN MAX
Works on all devices and platforms but has literally zero content.

HBO COME CLOSER YOU SONS OF BITCHES
All content in 4K*! (Video in all 4 Korners of the screen, blank in the center)

HBO SURPRISE (PULLS PIN FROM GRENADE)
Everything presented in cinematic "phone camera portrait mode" mode.

HBO (CLOSE-UP OF STARTLED ENEMY FACE)
Game of Thrones up to The Great Decline, at which point it helpfully goes back to season one.

HBO MAX JUST GO DON'T LOOK BAC- (OFF-CAMERA EXPLOSION)
The only streaming service that exclusively features movies with talking animals and babies.

HBO 2
Curb Your Enthusiasm with the signature music replaced by Imagine Dragons' biggest hits.

HBO WELL WELL WELL IF IT ISN'T MY OLD FRIEND MAX
Your favorite content from our competitors with a heavy blur applied over their watermarks.

HBO THOUGHT I DIED IN THAT EXPLOSION DIDN'T YA MAX
All our shows and movies, with the center audio channel muted.

HBO MAX YOU'D LIKE THAT WOULDN'T YOU
Pay $2 less per month, lose the ability to pause.

HBO THE TRUTH IS MAX I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH THEM ALL ALONG

Pay $2 more per month, gain an additional pause button in the UI.

HBO NOW WHY WOULD I, YOU ASK?
Only works if you enable Motion Smoothing on your television.

HBO THERE'S NO PROFIT IN HEROISM MAX
The complete Sopranos, run through that app that gives everyone doe eyes and noses.

HBO YOUR EMPTY IDEALS LEAD NOWHERE
All of our content, completely free, but your television emits a horrendous stench.

HBO MAX HOW MANY HAVE YOU KILLED IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE
Just that one abduction sequence from Fire In The Sky.

HBO NOW LOOK WHO- (FALLS OVER LEDGE)
Just the rest of Fire In The Sky, without the alien abduction sequence.

HBO MAX DON'T LET GO (FINGERTIPS SLIPPING)
Exactly the same as HBO MAX but your credit card is charged every hour for several pennies.

HBO MAAAAAAaaaaax!
Doesn't include any content per se, but does come with a chart that fully explains the difference between HBO MAX, HBO GO, and HBO NOW.

-∼Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

6.7 If Other Workers Acted Like Cops

Monday, Jun 15, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

Delivery Drivers

OPEN UP. PIZZA DELIVERY. LAST WARNING. PIZZA DELIVERY. OPEN UP!! Good evening sir. You're the one who called in this pizza? Slow down there, chief, we'll get to the pizza. First I'm going to need some identification. Heh. Shaved the mustache I see. You won't mind if I step in. Nice place you got here; looks expensive. Whoa, you married that? Lucky man. Cute kids, too. Look at you. So. What's a guy gotta do to get a cup of coffee, huh? RELAX. I told you, the pizza will be taken care of in due time. *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.*

Plumbers

What seems to be the issue with your pipes huh? What have you been doing to these pipes? You doing funny stuff with these pipes? Sit the fuck down. Don't take that tone with me. I'm just here to help, sir. Now let's try that again, this time without the attitude. *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* Don't move a fucking muscle. I'm trying to help here sir, I really am. I know you just want your toilet to work, and trust me, I'll be getting to the bottom of this. Oh good, Big Phil's here. Watch this one closely Big Phil, he's being belligerent. Tony, you made it just in time. Tony, stand behind him and make sure he doesn't get any bright ideas while I take a look at these pipes. Papa Paul, thanks for coming to our aide. This could be a messy situation so keep your wrench out just in case. Giant Gus, better late than never! Watch the door Giant Gus, let him know he's not checking out early.

Grocery Clerks

Ma'am do you know why I'm shredding this coupon you gave me? I'm asking you a question. No, you're guessing. Think about it for a minute. You can do it. No, I'm denying you this discount because you failed to follow the rules, ma'am. We have these rubber dividers for a reason ma'am, to keep order. Without them, society crumbles into chaos. Do you want to live in chaos, ma'am? Don't take that tone with me, STEP BACK ma'am. *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* Yes, I know there was no one behind you in line ma'am, that's not the point. The point is that you decided you wanted to live in anarchy, and - I'M THE ONE TALKING - congratulations, you just forfeit your tomatoes. Big Phil, see them escorted out.

Doctors

What's that? COVID-19, huh? Yeah, I've heard that one before. You sure you weren't asking to get infected? What were you wearing the day you got infected? I bet you were walking around with a big oversized t-shirt that read "COUGH ON ME" while sticking your face in the proximity of every mouth hole you could. You look the type. *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* You know it's bitches like you that get innocent folks in trouble. I have a friend who was once accused of giving someone COVID-19, they claimed he "didn't wear a mask and coughed on them in public" when he was out grocery shopping one day. But did they even consider her role in that? She shouldn't have been grocery shopping in that same aisle if she didn't want to get infected. Ridiculous. Oh. Right, your "infection." Tell ya what, I'll write all about your little "infection" on my clipboard here, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Drive Thru Workers

Excuse me? You want to run that by me again? Missing nuggets? Never in my entire career have I seen a nugget go missing. My team here are the most professional nugget baggers you'll see in your lifetime. Did you hear that boys? This lady thinks we stole her nugget! Did you perhaps consider your own role in this disappearance? Did your bag have any conditions you may have put it through, such as a torn hole for the nugget to fall through? Or maybe you ate it, and are just looking for a free ride to nugg town? Is that it? You looking for a free ride? Always looking for a way to get something for nothing? *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* You sicken me. You sit there and disgrace my career with your slander, and you wonder why we spit in your milkshake. Go ahead, write in your silly little complaint. Big Phil behind you will make sure you're taken care of.

Receptionists

Dave speaking, what do you need? What's so important that you need me to bother the Manager? You can take it up with me right here, right now. Calm yourself, don't get your panties in a twist. What's your full name? What's your address? No, I just need this information to transfer your call, miss. *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* I'm also gonna need your social security number and a photo of your first-born child. DO NOT question me, I've been

a receptionist here for 20 years, you have about 10 seconds to check your attitude, m'am. All just normal protocol. What's your mother's maiden name, m'am? What's your greatest fear? YOU ARE BEING UNCOOPERATIVE, I'm just trying to get your call transferred, miss.

Film Crew

Passing by mirror Who the fuck do you think you are filming me like that? Drop the camera, sir! *I'm gonna need backup here, we've got a troublemaker on our hands.* I SAID DROP THE CAMERA. *Rapidly starts firing* Oh good, you came just in time, Big Phil. OPEN FIRE. THEY'VE GOT A GUN. *Doubled rapid firing continues*

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

6.8 What Critics Are Saying About The Last of Us Part II

Wednesday, Jun 17, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

"I had to kill a lot of people. Literally had to, as the game gave me no non-lethal options. Then the game rubbed my face in all the killing it made me do and told me to feel very bad. This is the height of storytelling in games! Incredible!" *-IGN, 10/10*

"It's unfortunate that police brutality and the coronavirus have grabbed so much attention, as this game is frankly more important. When future generations look back at 2020 it will be The Last of Us Part 2 that looms large over all else." *-Game Informer, 10/10*

"After beating a dog to death with a framed photo in a harrowing three minute long sequence punctuated by splat sounds and plaintive whimpers, my character fell to her knees and inspected the framed photo. It depicted the dog being hugged by its owner in happier times. It was at this moment that I realized killing dogs was wrong. Is this the first video game to teach such a powerful lesson so skillfully?" *-Trusted Reviews, 5 Stars*

"The subject matter was so... mature that it made me want to die. Until I realized that surely I had already died, for I was in gaming heaven." *-Giant Bomb, 5 Stars*

"At one point I had to kill a young enemy scout with the detached head and neck of a giraffe. Afterwards, in a powerful moment, Ellie realized it was the giraffe from the first Last of Us. In a more powerful moment, Ellie realized the giraffe's neck was tattooed with the words, 'I BET THAT KID HAD A FAMILY'." *-PlayStationGamerUnbiased, 10/10*

"Because the graphics look so good the story is more good too. By wringing so much out of the PS4's hardware, Naughty Dog also wrings every ounce out of the player's soul's software." *-Comicbook.com(???), 5 out of 5*

"I shot a guy with one of those suction cup arrow toys and it went directly into his jugular. A fountain of blood sprayed everywhere as he lurched in an awkward stumble, delivering a powerful monologue about all the loved ones he would leave behind. Truly this is the Schindler's List of video games." *-Another Bullshit Site On Metacritic, 100/100*

"There are so many tense situations. One time I had to kill an enemy by shoving a drinking straw

into her ear and blowing a bubble of air into her brains before she could call for help. One time I shoved a pocketknife (unopened) into a sleeping guy's chest and had to wiggle it around until it damaged enough veins and guts to kill him. One time I had to brain an elephant with a big black weight that said "40 TONS" on the side in bright white letters. One time I had to press an entire family's faces into a belt sander at the exact same time while they pleaded for mercy. One time I had to drown an elderly woman while singing the goosebump-inducing slow version of Mad World. One time I had to dribble a teen's head off the pavement like a basketball and shoot it through a hoop while the head was still attached to the body and the person was still alive. At the end the game told me to feel bad. It took the medium of video games 40 years to reach storytelling maturity in video games, but here we are." *-VG247, 5 Stars*

BONUS: What I'm Saying About The PlayStation 5

"It looks like The Penguin's cloaca."

"It looks like a cyberclam that tried to eat an Apple TV and is frozen mid-barf."

"It looks like the Future Hockey rulebook emerging from one of the Westworld milk baths."

"It looks like it's about $600, if Sony is as high on their own farts as they've seemed the last few years."

"It looks like an object I'll have to beat a space dog to death with in The Last Of Us Part III."

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

6.9 Hey, Corporations! Get your Covid19 and BLM Ads out of the Cool Zone!

Thursday, Jun 18, 2020 by Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

This week, I want to talk about corporations using global tragedy to "get their brand name out there" and otherwise profiteer off of human misery.

Now before I get all wound up on these garbage companies trying to stamp their soul-crushing brand on the emotionally raw haunches of the human race, I should point out that not all major companies are doing it totally and utterly wrong.

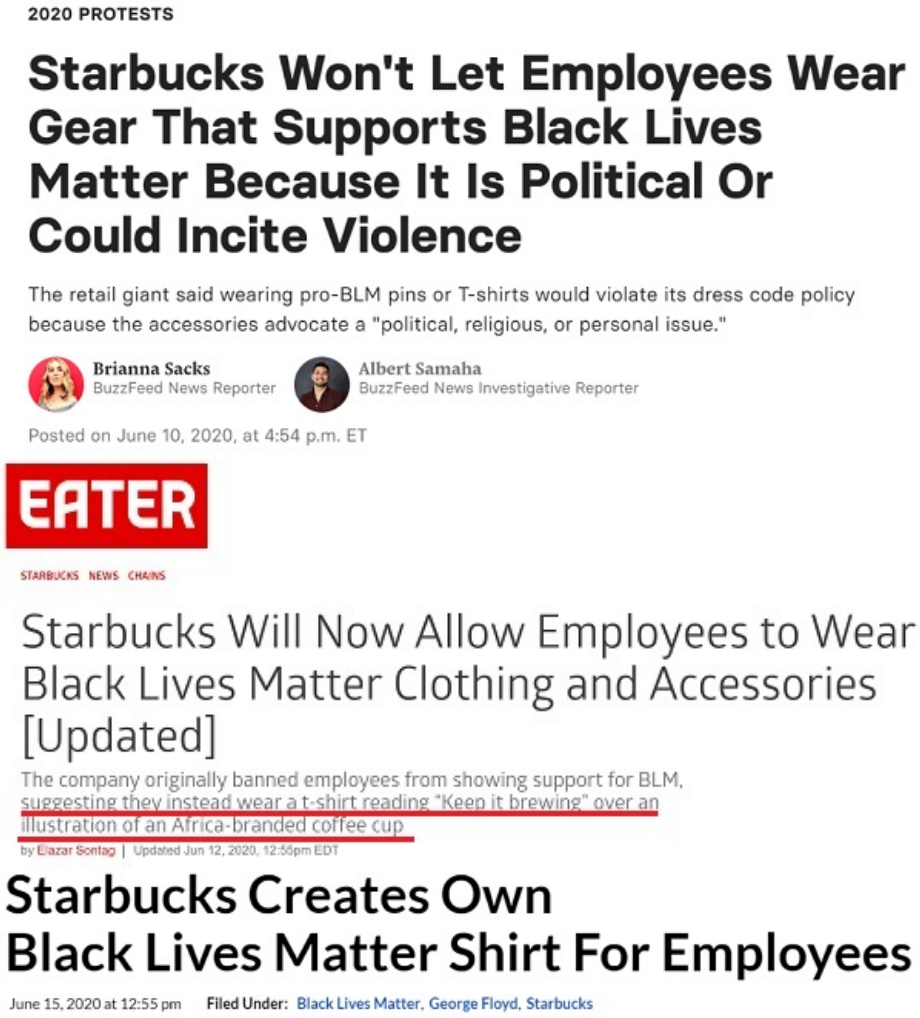
Take Uber: the company that keeps us from driving while drunk, and their subsidiary Uber Eats: the company that keeps us from driving while stoned. On June 4th, they announced they were suspending delivery fees for all black-owned businesses. So many struggling restaurant owners are depending solely on delivery services like Uber Eats. Their gesture gives small business entrepreneurs a better chance at staying afloat while simultaneously reminding white small business owners that, while they are no-doubt struggling as well (for which we are honestly all sad), they already got kind of a 400-year head start so let's not get too worked up over Uber knocking off $3 on an order.

I approve of this move, which reminds me of a joke: What is the difference between my privileged opinion and a black life? Answer: A black life matters.

Don't get me wrong, Uber Eats still charges all restaurant owners, including black ones, fees that could be as high as 30%. They just waived the "delivery" fee.

Therein lies the problem. No matter what gesture a corporation makes, no matter how much they pledge to donate to righteous causes, somewhere is a team of analysts making sure they get more than that value back. They get it back through some combination of increased political power or quid pro quo backscratching or exposure or just plain making sure that people don't burn your

franchises to the ground because you won't let your employees wear a hat that basically says, "hey, police officers, could you please stop torturing black people to death?"



2020 PROTESTS

Starbucks Won't Let Employees Wear Gear That Supports Black Lives Matter Because It Is Political Or Could Incite Violence

The retail giant said wearing pro-BLM pins or T-shirts would violate its dress code policy because the accessories advocate a "political, religious, or personal issue."

Brianna Sacks
BuzzFeed News Reporter

Albert Samaha
BuzzFeed News Investigative Reporter

Posted on June 10, 2020, at 4:54 p.m. ET

EATER

STARBUCKS NEWS CHAINS

Starbucks Will Now Allow Employees to Wear Black Lives Matter Clothing and Accessories [Updated]

The company originally banned employees from showing support for BLM, suggesting they instead wear a t-shirt reading "Keep it brewing" over an illustration of an Africa-branded coffee cup

by Elazar Sontag | Updated Jun 12, 2020, 12:55pm EDT

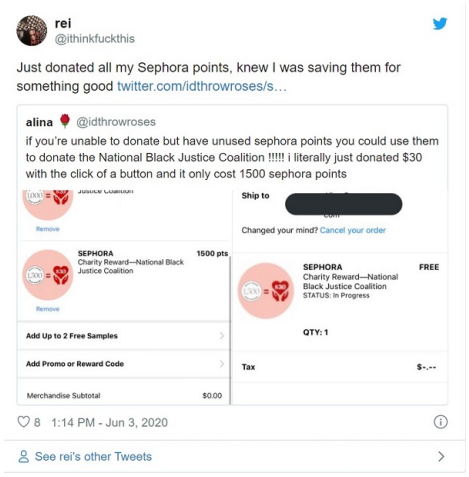
Starbucks Creates Own Black Lives Matter Shirt For Employees

June 15, 2020 at 12:55 pm Filed Under: Black Lives Matter, George Floyd, Starbucks

Sorry, Starbucks, I'm not going to let you get away with that. You don't get to put on your swimsuit and walk to the beach, you don't get to dip your toes into the waters of society to see if it's cooled off enough for you to dive fully into preventing employees from speaking out against racism. And, when the shark of pissed off black-supporting consumerism bites your toe off, you certainly don't get to walk away shouting, "I was on the shark's side all along, check out this shirt I made!"

(Also, "suggesting they instead wear a t-shirt reading 'keep it brewing' over an illustration of an Africa-branded coffee cup," which I can't even understand the point of enough to make fun of it.)

This "we are against protesting racial injustice... no, wait, now we're for it. And also we never were against it!" isn't the only scummy thing corporations are trying. They are working around the clock to try and take the movement for awareness of systemic injustice and decide that black people being executed in the streets is a GREAT time to slide in a few greasy "opportunities."


rei
@ithinkfuckthis
Just donated all my Sephora points, knew I was saving them for something good twitter.com/idthrowroses/s…
alina @idthrowroses
if you're unable to donate but have unused sephora points you could use them to donate the National Black Justice Coalition !!!!! i literally just donated $30 with the click of a button and it only cost 1500 sephora points
Ship to
Changed your mind? Cancel your order
Remove
SEPHORA
Charity Reward—National Black Justice Coalition
1500 pts
Remove
SEPHORA
Charity Reward—National Black Justice Coalition
STATUS: In Progress
FREE
QTY: 1
Add Up to 2 Free Samples
Add Promo or Reward Code
Tax
$-.--
Merchandise Subtotal
$0.00
8 1:14 PM - Jun 3, 2020
See rei's other Tweets

If you're unable to donate? Unable to donate? They have 1500 Sephora rewards points which, by the way, cost them $1500 in purchases from a chain of luxury French beauty stores (Luxury French beauty stores who will, if you look really closely at the fine print, steal the tax write-off of your donation.)

Sephora points holders: If you suddenly find yourself "unable" to donate, maybe look at your shopping cart and take out the $36 bottle of "DRUNK ELEPHANT D-Bronzi" Anti-Pollution Sunshine Drops" and the $45 can of "SOL DE JANEIRO Brazilian Bum Bum Cream," take that $81 and donate it to this person, Lucie Flynn. While Ms. Flynn was peacefully protesting in Oakland, a driver intentionally ran her over, breaking all of her ribs and incurring tens of thousands in medical bills beyond what insurance will pay.

But the worst, the absolute garbage-tier co-opting of BLM and Covid 19, the thing that makes me gag like I'm licking the bottom of a bus station garbage can, is the big banks trying to act like they are on the side of anything remotely resembling humans.

Many local bank chains and credit unions have actually done a great job working with customers for loan relief. But the big chains have been trying to get media exposure to portray the absolutely unbelievable farce that they give any more of a care about their customers than a python gives a care about the thing that is now making a goat-shaped bulge in its midsection.

Bank of America, whose shady financial practices were a big part of crashing the 2008 economy and were the subject of a Rolling Stone article entitled, "too Crooked to Fail," has decided to get in on the party. Yes, the same Bank of America executives who claimed $5.4 billions in losses to get a $1 billion tax refund in the same exact year they received $35 billion in bonuses have decided they are in the same corner as George Floyd, a guy who got executed over 20 measly dollars.

Their latest commercial is yet another saccharine attempt to lift up the spirits of a society who, by and large, doesn't seem quite ready to feel all happy and groovy.

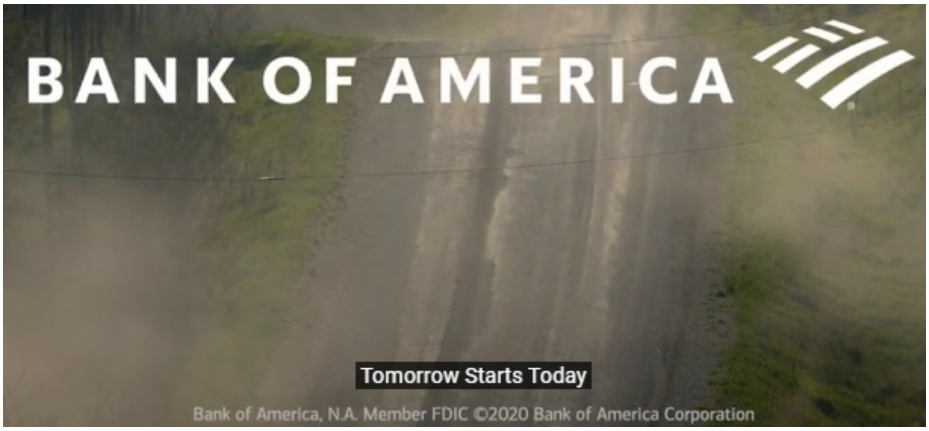
Now, this originally came out before the protests started and was meant to be a "let's feel inspired that we all just got wrecked by a super virus" commercial. But they've been airing it throughout the protest coverage, so I'm just going to lump it into both categories, as some tone deaf B of A marketing consultant probably has as well. Let's take a look at some shots with captions:

Yes, our hearts are cracked. But the notion that a global banking institution has a heart after they spend two decades fracturing society and the economy, perhaps irreparably, is the world's cruelest joke.

Speaking of which, Bank of America, now that you finally have my attention, will you address this spine-fracturing blow you've dealt to America?

What? No, Bank of America, no! If I encounter someone who has been hit in the head repeatedly with a hammer, I don't ask them, "how else can the light get in?" I ask them, "how can I help your valuable brains stop hemorrhaging out?"

Okay, Bank of America, is there anything else you want to say? Perhaps some nonsensical platitude that sounds inspiring but means absolutely nothing in the context of the English language.



Bank of America has pledged to donate $1 billion over the next 4 years to Black Lives Matter causes. "Over the next 4 years." Don't get me wrong: That would be great, Bank of America, if tomorrow you gave meaningful money. Then the tomorrow after that you gave even more money. Then tomorrow after tomorrow after tomorrow you gave enough money to change communities and reverse the institutionalized injustice. But I recently heard something that makes me call into question this future donation, this yellow brick road paved with tomorrows.

I heard someone say, "Tomorrow starts today."

@EvanHoovler, Evan Hoovler on Facebook

-~Evan "Drunk Nerds" Hoovler (@evanhoovler)

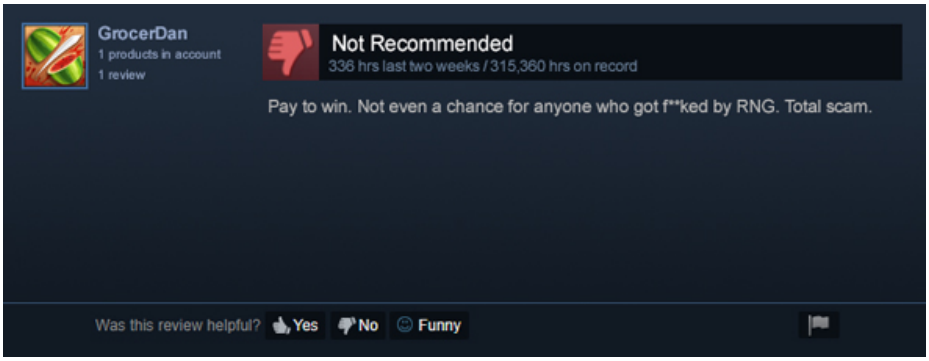
6.10 Steam Reviews For America

Monday, Jun 22, 2020 by Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

Additional writing contributors: Phiz Kalifa, Trevor Walker, and Kortney King-Lives

AMERICA
AMERICA is the ultimate sandbox experience. Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the
RECENT REVIEWS: Overwhelmingly Negative (3,140)
ALL REVIEWS: Mostly Negative (331,002,651)

CommandoCop
1 products in account
1 review
Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
don't get why everyone complains so much about this one. bunch of whiners!! do u guys even play the same game? It's not that hard if u know what ur doing lol.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny


GrocerDan
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
Pay to win. Not even a chance for anyone who got f**ked by RNG. Total scam.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

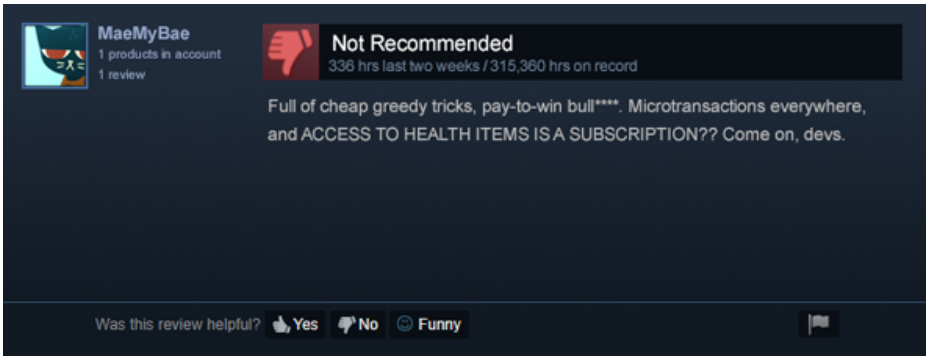
MadMartha
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
New "coronoa" bug a total fail!!! Ruined the game, now all you can do is sit home and watch television while we wait for a patch. YOU CAN'T EVEN GET A HAIRCUT IN-GAME. Will change my review once this gets patched.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

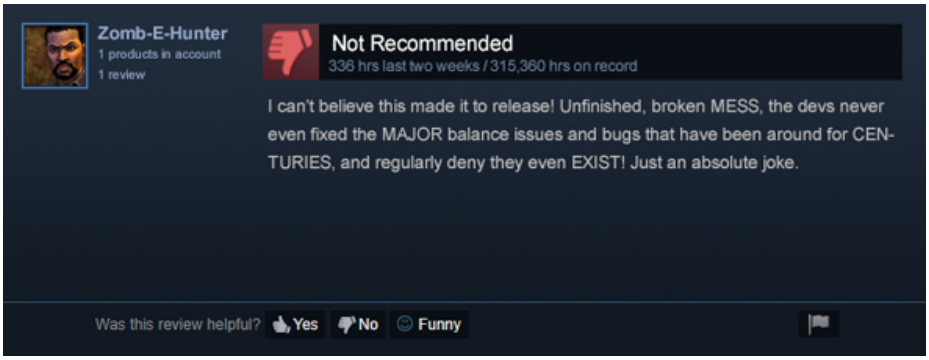
down2clown
1 products in account
1 review
Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
people who say its 2 hard r just whiners hoo pickd the wrong class/race combo shouldve gone w WASP u nerds lol! XD
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

Robin400
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
In desperate need of a balance overhaul. Some players are OP af right from the start?? WTF. It's a mess. Like only 1% of players are actually having fun. Did they even playtest this crap?
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

NaturalMusk
1 products in account
1 review
Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
great game
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

AK40oz
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
LOVED this game b4 new bug RUINED IT!!! Can't get burgers w the BOYS bc they say this bug is still being patched n now we have to "social dinstince" to keep our avs "safe". Lazy devs!! I bet they put the bug there on prpose to aplease the CASUALS.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny


MaeMyBae
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
Full of cheap greedy tricks, pay-to-win bull****. Microtransactions everywhere, and ACCESS TO HEALTH ITEMS IS A SUBSCRIPTION?? Come on, devs.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny


Zomb-E-Hunter
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
I can't believe this made it to release! Unfinished, broken MESS, the devs never even fixed the MAJOR balance issues and bugs that have been around for CENTURIES, and regularly deny they even EXIST! Just an absolute joke.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

ThottieHottie95
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
Lack of emotional impact. I want to care, but there's nothing here really grabbing me. Players just spend all their time sucking up to the top leaderboard players who got there through RNG and balance exploits anyway. LOL. Losers.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

DildoBagskins
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
too many ugly NPCs
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

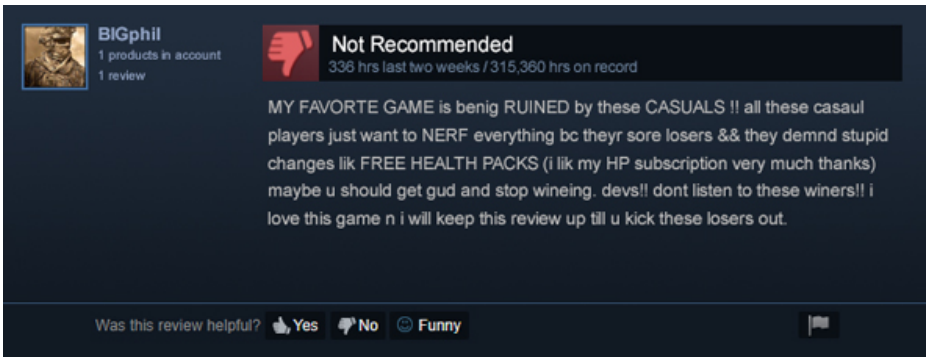
ThroWillow
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
Playerbase is OBSESSED with what's in player characters' pants, and what their avs do during the bedroom mini-game. Who gives a s***? Devs can get weird about it too, like trying to restrict our customization options down there? WTF.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

JesusMySavior
1 products in account
1 review
Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
ate fifteen hamburgers and choked to death. best country ever.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

iamwetgend
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
game sux, got bored of it ages ago when I died of starvation
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

StopCallinMeNazi
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
DEVS R PAID OFF BY JEWS TO LET MORE PEOPLE COME PLAY THE GAME BC THEY ARE DESPERATE TO NERF MY WASP RACE/CLASS!! SPREAD THE WORD!! GREDEDY DEVS!
_/⊠_
(ಠ_ಠ)
<;▬╦╤⁻:;- -
_/⊠_
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

SS Kick@$$
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
looks very pretty, but playerbase is toxic af and extremely hostile to new players. devs also very unresponsive and sometimes hostile to feedback. i was part of a in-game guild march for balance fixes n devs sent mods to ban everyone?? lol guess they cant handle criticism.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny


BIGphil
1 products in account
1 review
Not Recommended
336 hrs last two weeks / 315,360 hrs on record
MY FAVORTE GAME is benig RUINED by these CASUALS !! all these casaul players just want to NERF everything bc theyr sore losers && they demnd stupid changes lik FREE HEALTH PACKS (i lik my HP subscription very much thanks) maybe u should get gud and stop wineing. devs!! dont listen to these winers!! i love this game n i will keep this review up till u kick these losers out.
Was this review helpful? Yes No Funny

-~Nick Lives (@slicknicklives)

6.11 We Have To Stop Letting Assholes Ruin Everything.

Tuesday, Jun 23, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

We Have Fun Here

An Asshole is someone whose fixation on their own wounds outweighs their contributions to their community. This is the only definition of the term that matters. You are probably used to an Asshole being anyone who disagrees with you. You probably encounter a lot of people like this. I need you to be open to the possibility that **You Might Be An Asshole.**

Please don't disengage just yet. You are not an asshole of your own free will. Probably. You have been told to be independant your whole life, to ensure the security of your own requirements before attending to others. "Can't pour from an empty cup" and other quaint expressions which all translate to "You $>$ Others" through the lense of consumption. Fucking Retire. For many of you, Assholery is a survival mechanism. It is bared teeth and pointed claws, a bid to make yourself enough of a threat that predators victimize someone else. Everyone learns how to hurt through being hurt themselves. That becomes the default reaction for everything, normalizing a casual level of cruelty which poisons your every relationship with the world.

I'm not blaming you. I'm not judging you. I speak with the easy confidence of someone who has spent a lifetime doing this shit.

You Have To Cut It Out. If you're an asshole. If you're a non-confrontational normie, you have to stop letting assholes ruin your organizations. They will complain and inflict misery until they are given a level of control or agency that they will use to shift the acceptable window of acceptable behavior so far beyond the pale that every group becomes as toxic as a Linux convention.

I'm not saying Linus Torvaldus's unforgivable personality is the reason there are a billion and one Linux subgenres, but it is the reason they're all utterly unusable. If Linus possessed even the smallest capacity for human decency there'd be exactly one Linux, it would be named Linux, it would do everything in exactly two clicks, and Billy Gates would be drinking hobo soup in a unabomber

shanty. I am saying that. I'm saying that about you. All your exes are right. People claim assholes are "productive," but their definition of productivity only measures singular contributions, and not the impact of that contributon on the group as a whole. It's a rat-race measurement applied to a collaborative exercise, it's not actually measuring productivity. Assholes excel at singular contributions, because it allows them to assert control. They don't want to have to collaborate, because that involves ceding power.

If you worry you're an asshole, all you have to do is recognize your impulse to dominate, and simply make space for others. Don't say everything you think as soon as it comes to mind, it's probably meaner and snarkier than you realize. Be a capybara, a big furry presence undisturbing to its fellow wildlife.

If you're normal, and you are part of an organization dominated by assholes, you have to refuse to let an asshole warp what is acceptable. You've got to make a stand for mutual respect as the norm, and simply refuse to compromise on that.

Every allowance, every compromise, becomes fuel for further weakening of norms. "You let X happen, why not Y?" "X used to be normal, but now it's not?" These are the weasel questions of a motherfucker trying to get away with murder. Someone who starts from the assumption that change is abnormal would 100% financially support a fascist coup. Don't listen to their bullshit. Don't even give them a fraction of a second.

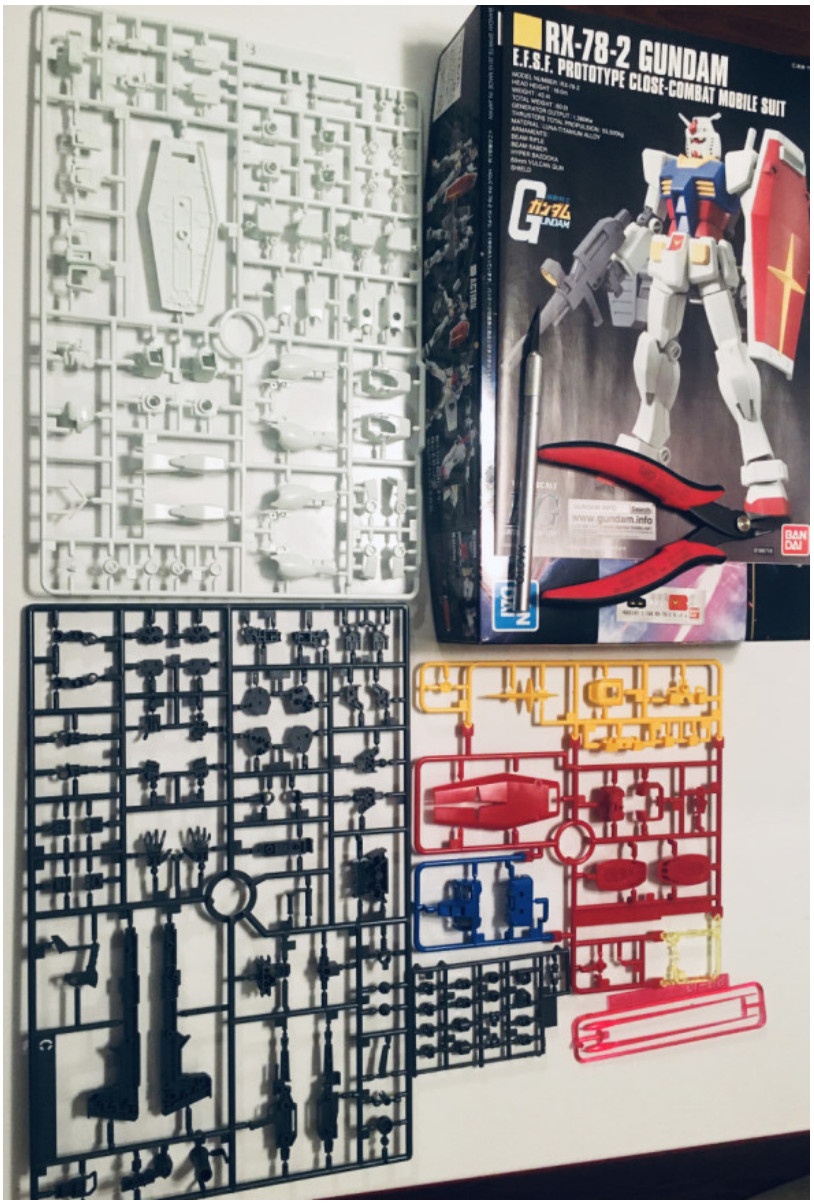
Especially if they use Linux.

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

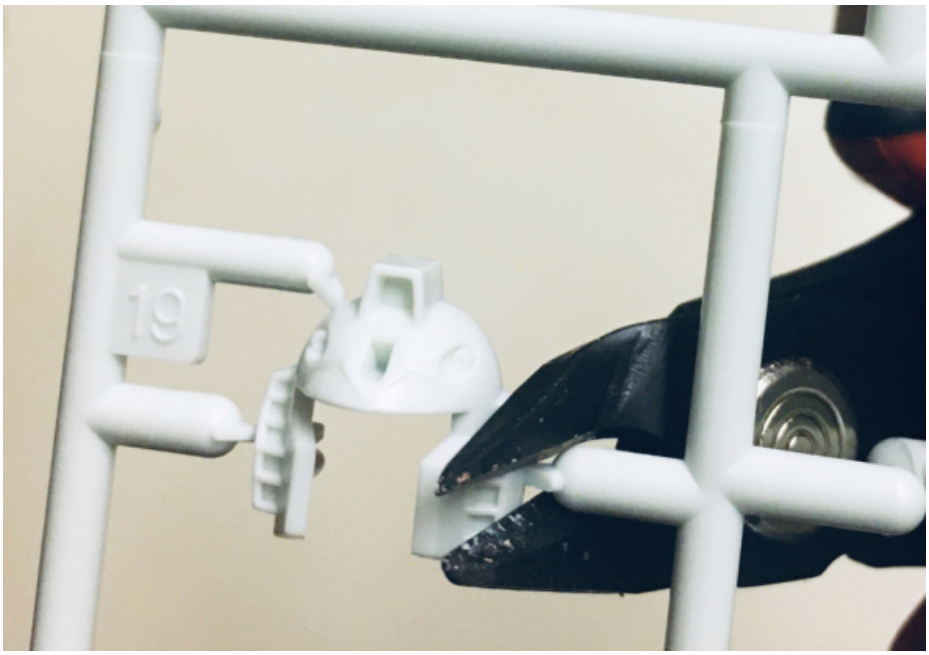
6.12 Let's Build A Gundam!

Wednesday, Jun 24, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

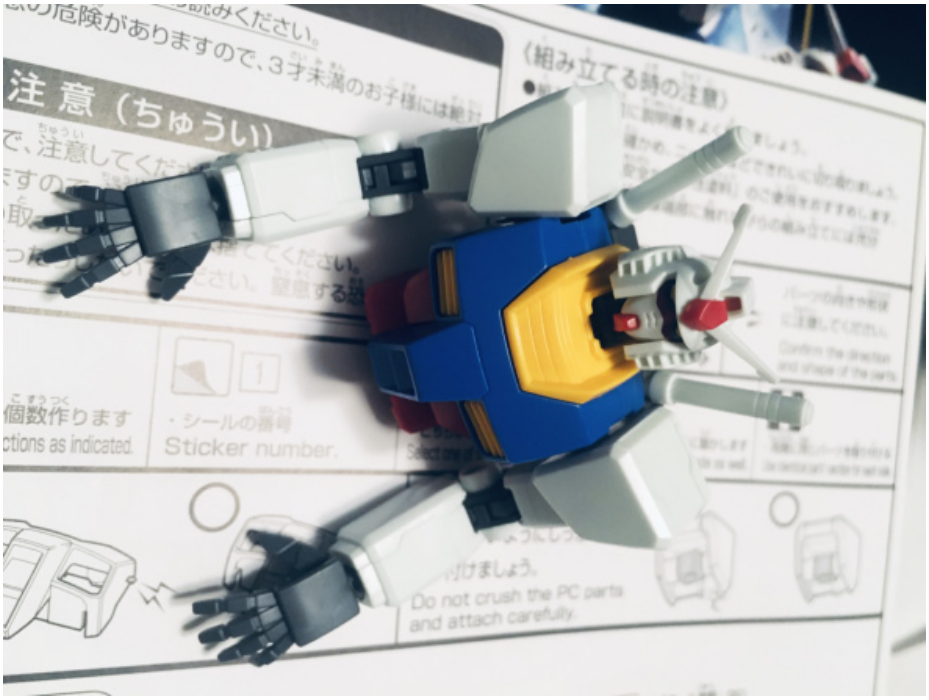
I have never built a Gundam before. The model kit for the most basic-ass white bread Gundam of all (Johnathan Gundam is its name, I believe) is only $11, and it's a good-looking robot. I am eager to escape reality. Now that's what I call a formula for adventure!



Your first instinct might be to build a Gundam while its box is still sealed. I, however, decided to open the box first. That's... a lot of parts. Oh god what have I gotten myself into



Just a trim around the ears? You got it. So, what's your favorite Christmas tree? Let me guess...
White Sprue-ce!



Check out this torso!
Yes, that was the first time I have used that phrase with pride in my entire life.

wolf whistle* Hold on, I'm frantically searching the box for a tiny lampshade, bulb, and fishnet stockings.

Nearly there! Elapsed build time: Four hours. Three, if you don't count all the times I stopped to gawk at a functioning elbow/knee/ankle made with individual "bone" pieces tucked away under the outer armor.

Johnathan Gundam poised for action, complete with a shield to ward off complicated handshake/fistbump routines.

Can you believe that entire box of parts went into such a little guy?

Wait, there's something else in the box. What is this? "Pour mech yeast on Gundam. Add water. Wait overnight."

Best $11 I have ever spent.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

6.13 expired

Wednesday, Jun 24, 2020 by Malt Schlitzmann (@maltschlitzmann)

resquiat in pissssssssssssss

MISSINGNO: AN ORAL HISTORY.

If you weren't there when we found Him, I don't think you can possibly understand what it was like. Missingno wasn't just an urban legend, or ugh, a *glitch,* and he definitely wasn'tjust a gateway to riches, as the overeager crowds would have you believe. He was a God, our God, and this is the story of the time I sucked His dick.

The secret died during the Goldrush, when the mainstream internet saw definitive proof of Missingno and all the also-rans flooded Cinnabar island hoping to encounter Him. The massive influx of people not only destroyed the shoreline habitat, but the fragile dunes as well. Tent cities appeared overnight, whole fields of wildflowers were dug up for fire pits and latrines.

By the time the Government reacted, the ecological damage was permanent. Of course, conservation was a convenient cover story for the real public health crisis Missingno spawned, but you know what came after. This was a solid month before the first save state corruption, and even that was like two months before experts had any verifiable proof linking the corruptions to Missingno.

We thought we were just gaming the system. Turning the house against itself. Back then, the only people who managed to find Him were the real l33t hackers, with shielded pokedexes and clone-safe expanding inventories. The real trick to escaping corruption was to never make eye contact, but of course, i didn't need to be taught that.

The Tek was beautifully simple, visit the park then fly to an island. Maybe that's why it had such a hard time gaining traction at the start, nothing so powerful could ever be so easy. What results from power granted without sacrifice? Nothing good, maybe it should have been obvious.

I bought my ticket to the Safari Zone, the proprietor just glad to see so much foot traffic after years of borderline neglect. Did he wonder why all these cheerful new customers were antisocial incels? Or did the money pile up too fast for him to see anything else?

Inside the park, I walked my paces, criss-crossing the fields and habitats, turning at specific rocks and doubling back over marked trails till my feet had drawn, what exactly? A parking lot for aliens? A front door to the Devil? The technical explanation was heavy on terms like "decompressed proximity buffer" and "invalid index header" but for all I understood, it may as well have been a Greek orthodox mass.

I flew to Cinnabar. I marched up and down the shoreline, a path already well dug by surreptitious visitors. Of course the water washed away any specific prints, but the mark of human greed was already visible.

I had heard rumors that His appearances were unpredictable, that even those following the Tek

perfectly might just strike out in the random numbers game. It was understood that he'd only show for one person at a time on that one specific beach, even if this later turned out to be false.

Hah, do you remember that video? It was like a preteen spring break, bug kids and pikafreaks rolling around massive piles of rare candy and nuggets, their inventories blown to shreds. Everyone freaking out in the Presence all at the same time, enraptured by their own personal divinities? I know the government tried to have it taken down, but. . . Folks have copies.

So, the beach was empty, right? This was maybe 5 in the morning, I was burnout trainer, had given up ever beating the Elite Four and accepted that, at the ripe old age of 20, i would never catch them all. I had a part time job using my 'mons to clean our wurmple nests from old people's basements, and on the weekends i would hang out in the local gym and try to intimidate 11 year olds.

I never won a single match. Eventually I developed such a reputation that people wouldn't even take half my money after I lost. Do you know what it's like to be pitied by a preteen runaway? To look your competitor in the eyes and know, that no matter how much you work, your efforts will never best the unchained tenacity of a child who wanders the countryside, shackling the feral powers of the world to their iron will?

It's humbling. Those kids fucked me up and did not hold back while doing so. That is damaging to the ego, as an adult, so I started huffing stardust. I'd wake up so wasted it'd take two or three potions just to get me upright. I was desperate, I knew I needed to make a change, so when my darknet dudetold me something was up, I ran. I ran at the opportunity, I ran from myself. I ran because I knew if I walked, I'd chicken out.

Standing on the beach, ankled up in freezing brine, just a scant half kilometer away from the richest Magikarp breeding grounds in all of Kanto, I knew I was too far gone to back out now. So I spent two hours crushing Krabbies and eviscerating Tentacools, waiting for this fickle God to show himself. The sun was threatening to rise, the night's storm now broke, the heavy strands of clouds sopped up thick swaths of purple and orange, a suggestion of a glory yet to come.

When I saw Him, oh, I swore it was an oncoming migraine. A smudge on the eye, a blur on the horizon which flies at you so suddenly that before you know it, everything around you is swimming. Imagine drinking from a bottle that swallows you whole, that's His presence. Like bathing in tequila, or drinking Sin through your whole body all at once.

On the flight over I thought, maybe I won't. Maybe I'll just fill up my inventory and run, like a bandit, heavy with treasure. I didn't tell anyone my plan. No one would know if I hadn't sucked Missingno's dick, assuming an uncontrollable variable in the fundamental calculus in the world even *has* a dick, if a dick operates at that level of phenomenology. . . Why would a god have a dick? What would they even use it for?

But, ah, even now to remember what it felt like to behold Him, the questions melt away. The doubts ran from me like cowards before judgement. He was Judgement, he knew everything I was thinking, already understood every motivation and impulse that brought me before Him. Nothing hidden, nothing concealed, even dressed in my traveling best I have never felt so nude.

No questions now, just overwhelming certainty, the crushing comfort of absolute understanding, absolute subservience to a wonder beyond measure. I fell to my knees, my ears full of hymns. I didn't feel the ocean, anymore.

Do you remember discovering what the human body looked like, at your swimming hole? Do you remember what distance and fog do to the human form, how even exquisite musculature grows coquettish and shy behind a layer of steam? That's what Missingno looked like. A really hot dude hiding at the back of an infinitely foggy sauna. When he turned to me, I was circled by a funhouse

mirror of abs. I was the creamy center of a man-cannoli. Every part of me was into it.

He pressed a range of hands against my skin. If he was rubbing my arms, I felt him on every part of my arm, all at once. Too many fingers in my hair, my mouth, entwining around my wrists, clasping them against my lower back, He did not needs binds to hold me.

When His voice grew louder, the hymns reached a creschendo, I swooned, nearly collaping in the water. I could feel the pokedex in my back pocket grow hot. Something in one of my pokeballs twitched. Had I known what was coming, what this would cost me, maybe I would never have had the courage to start, but. . . In for a penis, in for a pounding.

And what a penis! I think. Ontologically speaking, if something acts as a penis, that's enough to define it as a penis. Sure, when he whipped it out it looked like a rose blooming in high speed, and the tip of every petal moved like a planet in the solar system. If a bunch of graphing equations all went off at once, and ended up drawing the Last Supper, that's what Missingno's dick smelled like.

I wasn't just look-smelling at Missingno's dick, in every sensory input possible I was hear-feeling the totality of Missingno's dick. Every dick it would ever be, and had ever been, all at once. They don't make sissy training videos for sucking polydimensional dick.

So I leaned forward, and took up a mouthful of unicorn horn. Leaning forward more, and it felt like sticking my face in a Christmas tree.

I rocked back and forth, feeling my Pokedex grow intolerably hot. The battery case swelled, and all of my pokeballs started to twitch. Missingno's dick tasted exactly like a blue rasperry 9 volt battery. Liquid mercury dribbled out my ears, and I think it was supposed to be precum?

I should have been hard. I'm hard now, thinking back upon it, but at the time my body started to come loose at the seams, and i felt my entire genital sac retract into my body, leaving nothing behind save for the puckered twist of a newborn's bellybutton.

I tried reaching for His balls, instead I found my hands entangled in some kind of five dimensional cat's cradle, where every movement left an after-imageendlessly repeating itself, such that every attempt to disentangle myself merely resulted in more of me being trapped tighter than ever before.

I'm sure there's no metaphor in that.

I stuck my tongue out and rammed down as deep as it could go, as deep as my throat had space. He laughed, I pushed forward until i felt my head press against the cold static glass of a CRT screen, until the electric hiss blew up the pokedex in my back pocket and popped the six pokeballs on my belt like microwaved eggs. My hair stood on end, and to this day remains standing.

He slithered all the way deep inside, deeper even than the food should go. I felt myself cumming, squirting out of my new twisted-up pucker, felt him reach down and push me in the tender pushing places until the fluids were all the way out of me, to make more space for Him. I don't know if any of the gods in the machine can cum, what they would produce if they did. I only know He was finished with me by His sudden absence, when I became aware I was lying in the water, television static dribbling from my gaping maw.

Well, I say *absence,* but. . . After the Goldrush, the government tried to scrub everything about Missingnooff the internet. They forced social media companies to adopt hugely sweeping "social health and responsibility" statues, which were applied with all the grace of a hammer-wielding chimpanzee.

They said it was to prevent the spread of "fake news". To accomplish this, they shut down all discussion of the topic, purged the Teks, and disappeared anyone even associated with anyone who posted proof of contact. Suddenly, friends and family turned against the faithful in their lives,

reporting them to the Pokelice and burning their stacks of cloned items.

The disappearances began exactly one day after the statues went into effect. The outrage on social media was instantaneous, but it disappated as quickly as it flared up. Even the shitposts got got. Each time another famous pokemon trainer turned up missing, fewer people were less angry for shorter and shorter periods of time.

Eventually. . . It just all became too much. Even the hardcore faithful on the darknet could no longer deny the connection between Missingno and the corruption virus. Bodies just kept piling up in coma wards, every day younger and younger kids would strut out of pallet town, starters already an unevolved level 60, both of them foaming at the mouth and sleepless, hyped up on cloned candy.

It's weird to think how much of the public support for the social health laws was people just sick of seeing photos of the victims, their features bloody and rearranged like a Hannibal Lecter Salvadore Dali. You don't see trainers glitched out in pokemarts anymore, drooling static onto racks of Antidoes. You could tell a gym would be impossible to take because all tha names on the sign would be unreadble rows of gibberish. Sometimes the names would clip clear through the sign itself, just hanging out in the empty air.

Maybe we ran out of empathy. Maybe we just got tired of trying to compete in a bugged system. Missingno showed us what the real glitch was. Not the crossed wires in G-d's sleeping mind, not whatever abberant twist in evolution created pokemon to begin with, the original fault lay with nothing more than simple human greed, and our lust for power.

Things are safer now. The government's setup checkpoints on all the routes and town entrances which scans for cloned items or glitched out pokemon and their unstable trainers. The Supreme Council has certified all gymns are now hax-free, and the records of cheating Pokemon Masters have been purged. Everywhere is calm and boring, and all the mysteries have been chased down to exhaustion by vloggers. Whatever wild was left in the world has been stamped out.

Missingno hasn't been seen for years, and the worst of it is, He isn't even missed. The kids have moved on, they've got their own urban legends and glitch-Gods to chase through impossible teks. Hold down and B, check under every truck in the harbor. Pray you deserve even a glimpse.

It's all the same desperate hope that living isn't all random bullshit, that mastery or experience gives some edge upon the world. You can't ever know how intoxicating it felt to find a glitch that worked to your benefit, a ritual that yielded such immediate and tangible blessings. That's not something you find in religion, usually that's the domain of addiction. Is it any surprise, then, the stampede that followed?

Fah, as if I could ever judge any of them, as if I wasn't the most debased of all! That's why, you know, that's why He chose me. Why He chose me to, well, why He blessed me differently than all the others.

Everyone else came seeking something from him, a stack of infinitely replicating items. Impossible new attack powers, whatever their fickle hearts thought would bring them victory. I came to give Him something, a physical disciple, a worshipper at the altar of Him, and in that act of selflessness, He knew I could be trusted, knew I would be a worthy vessel for His essence.

It is true that He is gone, that He cannot be summoned by the old ways. It is also true that He, or a part of Him, or a blessing alien to anything observed before, dwells within me, sits upon the throne of my heart, hallowed in the temple of my empty body. Whatever was mine is His.

I am the glitch now. I bless the children with the items when they find me, softly laughing at the end of the empty lane, sitting in the furthest box on the abandoned pier. Call for me in the mirror of the high school bathroom, the one they never unlock. Tap the wall under the picture of the sailboat

and go through the secret door. There I am, your name already written on glittering treasure. What a lucky child.

The detectors find nothing. The doctors find nothing. The police in town they smile, with their handheld sniffer-guns and their attack Houndooms at the ready, hungry for glitch-blood. Utter fools. So sure of their baseless assumptions about what a threat looks like that they cannot see the one stalking in their midst.

Not one in a hundred of us original believers remain free, now, and of those most had the sense to quit the game years ago, go to ground, scrub their posts off the darknet before any accomplices turned into moles. Cowards.

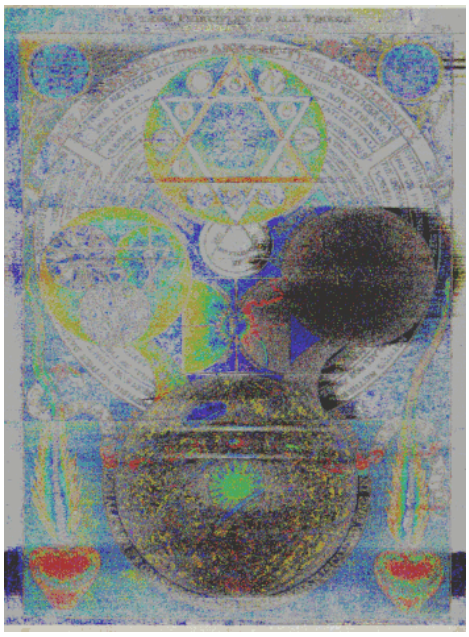
I'll see one, on occasion, I can always tell by the way they stare at me, mouths agape, shivering and drenched in a cold sweat. I wonder what I look like to them, if i eclipse their whole field of vision, until they see my eyes, my laughing eyes, and nothing else?

-∼Malt Schlitzmann (@maltschlitzmann)

6.14 Comforting Masculine Gender Affirmations, by Malt Schlitzmann.

Sunday, Jun 28, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

MALT SCHLITZMAN WELCOMES TO TO *COMFORTING MASCULINE GENDER AFFIRMATION*. Dedicated to that one portion of Daniel Mallory Lavery's new book.



No, I don't know what's going on. I have no answers.

Hello, friends and cis friends. I am Malt Schlitzmann, patently ridiculous, perpetually nonbinary. My mustache and facial hair would befit a lesser known Civil War general, the kind no one makes statues for. I have a spouse and my they have trained a seething mass of beetles to act as a child, and my estates are a teeming riot of native flowers and endangered butterflies. Hello! A most welcoming *hello*.

It is no boast to say I could, at any moment, afflict myself with a photogenic flower beard, but so great is my love of nature that I refuse to deny even a single flower to my flying friends. My beetle-child hungers with a thousand mouths. I am profoundly shirtless, even while wearing a suit, and I have come to welcome you, gently, at your own speed, into the churning waters of Masculinity.

Unclench your jaw. Relax your shoulders, roll your head from side to side. Imagine your skull is empty but for a single, oddly shaped basketball, which dribbles itself around your insides. Bend your head back so far that the rim of your flatcap touches the name tattooed between your shoulderblades. Resolve not to email that ex, in fact, resolve to never contact any of your exes ever again.

Put the thought of exes, nay the sum totality of dating, aside for now. Imagine it as an above ground hot tub whose controls have long since been locked on "Maximum." You cannot control it, but you can control getting *into* it. You can choose not to boil your nards in the hot tub of Emailing Your Exes. Bro, you got this. Don't boil your nards, bro.

Know that masculinity means that there is a part of you the slings and arrows of Fortune shall never reach. You are forever a Summer Lad, now. Sitting on an infinitely lush lawn, in a suburb which has never known the police. There are no houses, only mountains of bushy rhododendrons and fences begging to be peeked over.

The Crew rolls up on bikes. Your town has plenty of nominal youth groups, Tom's Troublemakers, Benny and the Jetsetters, The Full Nelsons, but only yours is affable and well-intentioned enough to be simply, The Crew. There are collectible cards of every imaginable sort flapping against a veritable forest of spokes.

You smile. Duane smiles. Other Duane smiles. *Graduation* by Vitamin C plays from nowhere. They are all named Duane, The Crew. This was decided the summer before you moved to town, when the Original Duane was getting hassled by the mean nerds from behind the comic shop. They are all wearing athletic shorts. It is not required that you become Duane to chill with the Duanes, but you know that if you asked, they would receive you. You would be made a resident of the land of Duane with lopsided grins and much back patting. The rites of passage for the truly blessed.

Would they allow you to join them in the pocketless comfort of athletic shorts? It is almost too much to dream.

You have a car. It was purchased through funds you have in abundance. It is economically impractical but stylish, not ostentatiously so, it bespeaks the unified intention which guides your life like the handstrap on a ski-lift. You and the Duanes love skiing. You love snow, and the thickness of winter, and the taste of cocoa sipped while gazing into a fire. Duane and Duane are bickering over who gets to hold the Designated Poking Stick. Everyone laughs when Duane, ever the fool, burns his last marshmallow! *Oh Duane!*

The Duanes are shaking you back to yourself. You buy penny candy at the flea market. You throw rocks at a disused rail bridge. The Least Duane's heart is broken so loud all anyone can say is a hugely silent *we love you.*

As the sun sets over the broken dam, The Least Duane becomes the nucleus for an atomic Bro Grab. Duane hugs Duane who hugs Duane and they all thrum with calming affirmations. They glow so bright the pain is purged from them all, shedding off like medical tape in the Love Sauna.

The light overwhelms, you stumble backwards. A love beyond depth, a depth beyond measure, the more masculine you become the greater its mysteries become. The ridge of a mountain seems but the fingertips of a sleeping giant, so vast are your known unknowns.

Then the giant farts. Duane farts. Everyone farts so bad the air develops a gradient. Duane is reeling. Plant life withers, as the gas extends its noxious tendrils. You grow disgusted with them. Duane is disgusting! All men are! You are reminded of the profound gulf between you and the Brotherhood of Duanes, mistaking their chaos for a coded dance you will never be invited to.

Then you fart. To show them who's boss, how unremarkable a talent it is. They redouble their laughter, and the gulf closes. You laugh despite yourself, to spite yourself. Duane laughs. Other Duane laughs. The Least Duane has been reduced to an ingot, glowing molten hot. You see much of yourself in this Incandescent Duane, despite the vast differences in the fires that forged you. You wonder what color you would glow, if you allowed the Duanes to love all the hurt out of you.

You reach for the dime in your denim jacket pocket and roll it between your fingers. How small would you be, with all the empty spaceloved out of you?

You are eating hot dogs on a pier. The pier is infinitely long, the ocean infinitely blue. You drop the corn dog on your sweaty, unfashionably slim-fit jeans. They are befouled, cursed with ketchup and granulated sugar. "I want to be a Duane." You hear yourself shout. The Duanes are already

smiling. Duane takes off his outer shield of athletic shorts, revealing a protective sub-layer beneath.

"Never go anywhere without backup shorts." Duane says.

"Never know where there will be a Duane in need." Duane says.

"A Duane in need-" One starts.

"-is a Duane indeed." Another finishes.

You smile. Duane smiles. Duane says "Duane" and you nod.

"Duane." You say. And it's true. You are happy, and your pants?

So athleisurely.

-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

6.15 DEAR FURRIES: WE WERE WRONG

Tuesday, Jun 30, 2020 by Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

jfc this article was absolute garbage

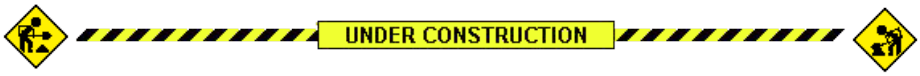
-∼Phiz Kalifa (@maltschlitzmann)

Chapter 7

July

7.1 Pardon Our Dust

Saturday, Jul 04, 2020 by Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)



Something Awful is in the process of changing hands to a new owner. In the meantime we're pausing all updates and halting production on our propaganda comic partnership with Northrop Grumman.

If all goes well the front page will relaunch with a bunch of changes, all focused on making this site more fun to read. More fun seems better than less fun. Let's go with that.

Thanks for your patience. Please watch your fingers. Please don't look at my fingers.

-~Dennis Farrell (@DennisFarrell)

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